

# Hereford HOPVINE

The Newsletter of the Herefordshire Branch of CAMRA

Issue No 62

Summer 2016

Free



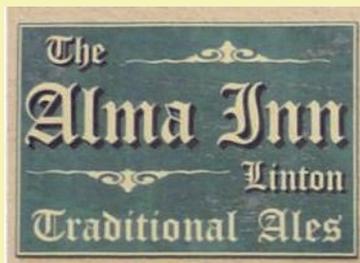
A WALK IN THE WOODS



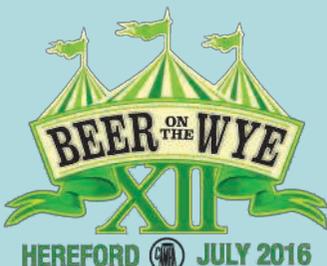
LUSTON REGAINS ITS BALANCE



NEW OWNERS TAKE THE BAIT AT UPPER SAPEY



SUMMER PUB OF THE SEASON



BEER ON THE WYE - ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW  
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LATEST BEER, CIDER & PUB NEWS



**CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE**



## WYE VALLEY BREWERY



# MAKING OUR BEERS LOOK AS GREAT AS THEY TASTE

Our new-look core range — same great taste, new fresh feel.

[wyevalleybrewery.co.uk](http://wyevalleybrewery.co.uk)

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## HEREFORD'S 'CATHEDRAL' TO BEER & CIDER

*Beer on the Wye XII will be in a 'cathedral' devoted to beer, cider and perry over the weekend of the 8th to 10th July 2016.*

This summer's *Beer on the Wye* returns to the riverside at the city's Rowing Club over the weekend of the **8th to 10th July**, with our new larger marquee being unzipped to the thirsty masses at 2pm on the Friday afternoon. It's then open until 11pm Friday night and from 12noon to 11pm on Saturday and, finally, from 12noon to 5pm on the Sunday.

One major change for the twelfth Festival is the marquee: not only is it bigger, but it is shaped like a cathedral - complete with two wings (transepts) set back and either side of the performance stage. But be assured we won't be going into competition with the Bishop and his loyal flock just along the River Wye from us – our proceedings and drinks will be totally different!

A new, bigger marquee this year means:

- More space for beer, cider and perry – over 24,000 pints of it - all nicely chilled-down and waiting for you to come down to drink at your leisure on the genteel banks of the River Wye.
- More space under canvas to protect revellers from the searing heat of the mid-day sun (and the rain, should it dare to turn up)
- The two wings provide a much larger unobstructed area in front of and to the sides of the main performance stage, so that you can see the eight live bands easier - including from outside the main marquee.

And what better way to whet your appetite ahead of the Festival than by following the progress of the marquee going up from Monday the 4th July onwards on our Facebook page at: [www.facebook.com/beeronthewye](http://www.facebook.com/beeronthewye)

### Beer on the Wye XII is for everyone

With its wonderful laid-back atmosphere set in a riverside meadow in the historic heart of Hereford, *Beer on the Wye* has become a 'must-do' festival for many. People come from near and far. Last year just shy of 6,000 people attended over the three days and drank between them over 20,000 pints – and this year we are expecting more people to drink even more beer and cider! And we're proud to boast that it's always trouble-free - it's just a great event in a fabulous location.

### Beer & Cider

The festival will showcase around 130 different cask beers from across the UK; a selection of 40 World beers, and over 120 ciders and perries (a hundred of them from the county of Herefordshire alone). It all



### FESTIVAL SOUNDS

Friday

6pm Mike Parker

*Roots, blues, folk and Americana*

7.30pm The World of Subduction

*Reggae, Fusion, Alternative*

9.30pm The Luke Doherty Band

*Blues, Classic Rock*

Saturday

3pm Slippery Slope

*Klezmer, French, Ska, Gypsy, Folk*

5.30pm The Rooters

*Classic Rock Covers*

7:30pm The Hayriders

*Rockabilly Rock 'n' Roll*

9.30pm The Skimmity Hitchers



*Scrumpy & Western*

Sunday

2pm Emma & The Professor

*Acoustic Contemporary Folk Roots*



Lazing down by the river at Hereford's Beer on the Wye promises to be quite a show!

But it's not just about beer, cider and perry. There will be eight live bands playing across the weekend (with **The Luke Doherty Band** and **The Skimnity Hitchers** headlining on the Friday and Saturday nights respectively); along with an extensive and varied selection of sensibly-priced hot and cold food (including a mega-hog roast and imaginative vegetarian options), as well as soft drinks, sweets and Herefordshire's own Tyrrells Crisps.

Sunday is the popular **Family Fun Day**, where parents can take the opportunity to relax and enjoy some of the many beers, ciders and perrys at a greatly discounted price, whilst the little 'uns can enjoy the bags full of entertainment and activities we have laid on for them. On other days well-behaved and supervised children are admitted up until 6pm. This really is a festival for everyone – families as well.

Running full pelt on the festival's main beer bar - last year over 20,000 pints were served



*Beer on the Wye* is proud to support HOPE, our Festival charity, who make a good fist of running the tombola and lay on a wonderful selection of things for the kiddies to

do on the Sunday Fun Day. There will also be a CAMRA products stand where you can buy various beer, cider and pub-related publications (some discounted) and get a great deal on CAMRA membership.

GETTING IN: TIMES AND ADMISSION

Friday 8th July	2 - 11pm	£4
Saturday 9th July	12noon - 11pm	£6
Sunday 10th July	12noon - 5pm	£1

QUICK ENTRY PACKAGES cover your admission, your refundable glass deposit and tokens to get your first drink.

Friday/Sunday - £10; Saturday - £15

You can get more tokens once inside - all unused tokens are refundable

- Children admitted until 6pm; must leave by 9pm
- Discounts for CAMRA and HRC members.....you will need to show a valid membership card.
- Well-behaved dogs on a lead are welcome

FESTIVAL EATS

- Meat Wagon - *burgers, hot dogs, bacon rolls etc*
- Falafels - *various fillings, including vegetarian*
- Loafers - *value savoury pastries plus bread and cheese*
- Fish & Chips - *an old favourite*
- Pizza - *cooked in an oven on site, including vegetarian*
- Hog Roast - *never disappoints*

FESTIVAL VILLAGE

- small/medium tent pitch £10per night
- large tent or/caravan/camper van £15per night  
*(no advance booking necessary, pay on the day)*

Campers are requested to refrain from lighting fires (barbecues are acceptable) and to be mindful of disturbing your neighbours under canvas after midnight.



Always a great atmosphere inside the festival marquee

SUNDAY FAMILY FUN DAY

- Adult admission £1, accompanied children free.
- Discount on all draught beers, ciders and perries.
- Madcap happenings and disco.
- Facepainting for all the family.
- Kiddies krafty korner for big and little people.
- Leominster Ladies Morris (Jenny Pipes)
- Fun slide
- Live acoustic music
- Crazy pillow bash
- Icecream van
- Skittles
- Sweeties stall
- Stocks
- Tombola

**Camping it up**

And if you want to stay over, there is the **Festival Village** for camping and caravans right next door to the main site. With toilets and full shower and washing facilities available 24/7, as well as a hot breakfast service provided on the Saturday and Sunday mornings, there really is no need to slum it. It's got an atmosphere all of its own. Why not make a weekend of it – many do!

**Cheaper on the Friday**

This year we have reduced the cost of admission on the Friday to only £4 anytime. Details of all times, prices and other general stuff can be found in the 'Getting In' box. You'll also find more information at [www.beeronthewye.org.uk](http://www.beeronthewye.org.uk) including contact details and booking for the Festival Village camp-site. You can also follow things as they develop at [facebook.com/BeerOnTheWye](https://facebook.com/BeerOnTheWye) and [twitter.com/beeronthewye](https://twitter.com/beeronthewye)



HEREFORDSHIRE CAMRA  
PUB OF THE YEAR 2013

Fine Cask Ales.  
Home-cooked food.  
Continental Beers &  
Lagers.

Cask Marque accredited.

Open 11am-11pm, Mon-Sat, and 11am-10.30pm Sundays.

Food served 12-2.30; 6.30-8pm

Discover us up the cobbled lane behind the Market House, on the way to the church.

Prince of Wales, Ledbury

*Good Beer, Good Food, Good Times.*

Tel: 01531 632250

Website: [www.powledbury.com](http://www.powledbury.com)



## LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

### AFTER THE HARVEST

Arrangements with Saxon City have run into difficulties and no further brewing has been carried out since 2015.

### KELPAUL

The session IPA referred to in the last Hopvine was named Chinook, and both cask and bottles sold out in record time. The next brew is Pagan Pale 4% ABV due out in June and brewed with Olicana - a new breed of English hop. Kelpaul beers can now be found at the Tump, Wormelow; Plough, Little Dewchurch and in bottles at De Koffee Pot at the Left Bank in Hereford.

### LEDBURY

April 2016 was the busiest month for sales to date, 95% of which goes to permanent local outlets. Concentration on the three core brands (Gold, Bitter and Dark) has left little capacity for specials. Two brews of Phoenix, the 4.5% ABV porter, sold out in advance.

### ODYSSEY

Odyssey still remain very busy. They are trying to increase the amount of beer they bottle to meet the current very high demand.

A series of single hop beers is being brewed during May and June. Each hop will be used in two beers, one a session IPA at 4.2% and the other a full strength 6% IPA. El Dorado Fiend Lite and El Dorado Fiend IPA were brewed with El Dorado hops, and the "Fiend" series continued with two beers each using Citra and Simcoe hops.

These latter two hops in particular are extraordinarily expensive and hard to get hold of at the moment and this demonstrates the epitome of what Odyssey are trying to do with all their beers. Mitchell Evans has flown in the face of advice from Alison, his accountant, his book-keeper and his own parents - and has brewed these beers anyway!

Next up is a summer beer - an American Wheat

using Citra and Amarillo hops. This will be bottled and kegged because wheat beer is thought not to be a style that suits cask, needing to be more heavily carbonated and served at a colder temperature. As ever it will be keg-conditioned.

Zombie Blood was so well received that an 'Imperial' version will be brewed at some point this summer at around 7.4%, which will be Odyssey's first full strength red IPA.

### SWAN



Leominster's Ale Taster, David Minton, approves Cygneture, the latest brew at Swan's trade launch.

Swan Gold at 4.0% ABV and Swan Amber at 4.4% ABV can now be found at the Grape Vaults in Leominster, the Wellington at Wellington, the Swan on the Square in Kington and as a guest ale in many other local pubs. Brewing has commenced of a third core beer, Cygneture Ale at 3.6% ABV. This is a chestnut-coloured brew, dry hopped in the fermenter with Target and Goldings hops.

The first beer off the pilot line is Arm Breaker, an IPA at 6.0% ABV. Only two firkins and two pins have been brewed, so keep your eyes open for it!

The brewery will be represented at the Bartestree Beer and Cider Festival on Saturday 25th June in the Village Hall.

### WOBBLY

There was success for Wobbly at *Ludlow Spring Festival* in the *SIBA Wales and West Beer Competition*. Their bottled conditioned India Pale Ale No.3 (6% ABV) won a Gold Medal in the Premium Strong Beers section.

**Short Measure? No price list on display?**  
**Contact Trading Standards 08454 040506**  
[www.herefordshire.gov.uk/trading-standards](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/trading-standards)

Work continues on the steam boiler and the new 30-barrel plant, which is mainly intended for contract brewing for both nomadic brewers and established brewers with capacity shortfall.

Sales of the core ales continue to grow, with outlets in Birmingham, Manchester and Pembrokeshire. Recent new brews include Fools Gold, a 3.8% ABV golden session ale and Proper, a 6% ABV hoppy IPA.

**WYE VALLEY**

In addition to its much loved beer brands, an exciting departure for the brewery is the launch of a lager called 1985. As with all Wye Valley Brewery products, 1985 is traditionally made using the finest ingredients including; locally grown Pilot hops, Wye Valley Brewery own ale yeast, and Extra Pale Maris Otter barley. 1985 was officially launched on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June and will be available in local pubs soon.



Output of late has been very high, with record beer sales in December and March. Bottled beer sales are going particularly well and a batch has just reached China for the first time.

Introduced as a monthly special, The Hopfather, is now a permanent addition to the cask beer range. A smooth-bodied 3.9% ABV ale with an intense red colour, it has a crisp bitterness and spicy honey-pine flavour, thanks to a high level of Herefordshire Target and Goldings hops.

A limited-edition beer, Wembully at 3.8% ABV was brewed to celebrate Hereford FC reaching the final of the FA Vase competition. 10p from each pint sold was donated to the Adam Stansfield Foundation.

Adam was a very popular member of the Hereford United team for two seasons, but died in 2010, aged 23, from colorectal cancer. The foundation provides football-related funding and equipment and helps raise awareness of bowel cancer.

**LUDLOW**

Ten years into the business Ludlow Brewery reports that sales of their beers are up year on

year thanks to continuing interest from Herefordshire and Shropshire publicans ordering more Ludlow Blonde and Gold.

Gary Walters, Head Brewer, is a firm believer in *Locale* and has teamed up with *Local to Ludlow* in hosting occasional Sunday produce markets at the brewery. The last one was a major success, says Gary, "What is better than do your shopping then relax over a pint!". The next one is coming up in September, 2016.

In the meantime, the brewery is hosting a series of events during the Ludlow Fringe Festival in mid to late June including comedy nights as well as a Shakespeare production but there's more on offer throughout the summer. For a full list of events at the Shed take a look at the Ludlow Brewing Company website at

[www.theludlowbrewingcompany.co.uk](http://www.theludlowbrewingcompany.co.uk)

**THE BARRELS**

**HEREFORD'S LOCAL**  
 69 ST. OWEN STREET  
 01432 274968  
 FULL RANGE OF WYE VALLEY BREWERY BEERS

## LOCAL PUB NEWS

There is sad news to report from the **Boughton Arms** at Peterchurch, following the untimely death of landlord Alan Hughes. He made CAMRA very welcome when a recent branch meeting was held there, and had been at the helm for four years. Condolences go to his widow, Sheila.

Karen Miller, the landlady of the nearby **Nags Head**, has smartened up the pub by investing in a new bar; redecoration inside and out, and resurfacing of the car park. She serves a single changing ale of varying styles, sourced both from local breweries and further afield. The pub is open all day, every day and offers food lunch-times and evenings.

The **Rhydspence Inn** at Whitney-on-Wye is thriving since the once-threatened Grade II-listed border pub was re-opened by Mark Price on the 12<sup>th</sup> February. And even more good news is that the beer range is changing – out has gone the Doom Bar and in has come Swan Gold from Leominster's fledgling Swan Brewery.

A performance by the Foxwhelp Morris men on Tuesday 14th June at 7.30pm launches the **Oxford Arms'** annual Beer Festival in Kington. Forming part of the Kington Festival, the Saturday evening of the 18th will have live music (9pm start) provided by local group, The Alltones - who play covers from the 70's to the present day. Later in the summer the Oxford's August Bank Holiday beer festival will kick-off on Thursday 25th August with Hot Rox playing on the Saturday from 9pm.

Still on Kington's Victoria Road, the **Olde Tavern** has started its long-promised food operation in earnest. Called *Out the Back*, it doesn't normally detract from the pub's unspoiled character, as it primarily involves a room hidden away at the rear - although bar snacks can be taken in the front rooms if required. Service runs from 6.30 to 9pm Fridays and Saturdays and 12noon to 2pm on Sundays. Ring 07582 235765 to book a table.

On the move again following the closure of the Radnorshire Arms in New Radnor, Steve & Gaye Dunn, are now running the **Lion Restaurant** in Kington. At the other end of town, the **Royal Oak** has started serving Thai food in the evenings, although more traditional fare is offered at lunch-times, including the Sunday roast.

**Kinnersley Arms** at Kinnersley closed at the end of April.

The **Imperial** on Hereford's Widemarsh Street is now selling Imperial Bitter, a 3.7% ABV 'house beer', brewed for them by Brecon Brewing. This beer is complemented by two or more other beers in an impressive array of ten handpumps strung out along the bar.

After some very promising plans were shared with the *Hopvine* team by the owners and operators of the **Grapes Tavern** on Hereford's East Street, the place closed in April, and was still closed at the end of May for reasons unknown.

**Shack Revolution** is tucked away in Bastion Mews (the courtyard area by the junction of Bath Street and Union Street). Until recently it has only sold keg craft and bottled beers, but is now selling real ale straight from the cask – albeit only

*Gloucester CAMRA City Pub of the Year 2014 and 2015*

## The Pelican Inn

4 St Mary's Street, Gloucester, GL1 2QR

Telephone 01452 387877

*Perfectly positioned between Gloucester cathedral and Kingsholm rugby stadium. The Pelican Inn serves the entire Wye Valley range plus two guest ales from other breweries. 8 Real Ales and 6 Proper Ciders and NO LAGER, this is a traditional pub where Real Ale is at the heart of everything we do.*





It's in the middle! Hereford's Shack now does real ale - well, for some of the it time does.

from Wednesdays through to Sundays. The real beer is Purity Gold from Warwickshire-based Purity Brewery and is dispensed from a small 4.5 gallon cask (called a pin), which is rather quaintly incorporated into the bar back (see photo).

As the new café culture grows in Hereford **De Koffie Pot** – part of the Left-Bank complex, is serving Wye Valley HPA and Butty Bach direct from casks on the bar as well as a wide range of bottled beer and cider.

A planning application has finally been submitted to demolish Hereford's **Ship Inn**, which has stood vacant and forlorn at the junction of the city's Ross and Belmont Roads for more than fifteen years. In view of the lack of local interest in keeping the pub and its virtual abandonment, Herefordshire CAMRA did not object. Herefordshire Housing is proposing to build 35 new flats on the site: 19 'affordable' and 16 'market rent'.

After a short period of closure, the Punch Taverns-owned **Man of Ross** in Ross-on-Wye re-opened in the middle of May selling Doom Bar and Wye Valley HPA. The pub's previous licensee, Simon Greene is now focusing on his other pub business at the **Prince of Wales** on the town's Walford Road. The Prince was yet another pub that was briefly operated by the *NumberWorks* pub company, but can now boast to being the sole surviving pub on the south side of Ross. It seems to be thriving as a community-focused venue, with family dining, pub teams and three beers featuring on the bar: Wye Valley Bitter, plus any two from typically Butcombe, Doom Bar, Wells Bombardier and Adnams. It also sells Weston's Old Rosie Cider.

## MORE THAN JUST A PUB

### *The Bells at Almeley wins BBC award*

The BBC's Food Award for **Best Food Retailer 2016** has come to Herefordshire. It was won not by a well-known retailer or food specialist, but by the Bells Inn at Almeley, which opened its own Market & Deli shop in the pub three years ago after a nearby farm shop closed. The Bells beat 700 other competitors nationally. Alongside a pint from Herefordshire breweries, locals and visitors can buy Hereford Hop Cheese; locally-produced rapeseed oil; free-range eggs; vegetables; garden plants; freshly-baked bread; home-made cakes, and other tasty produce.

The Bells Inn is in a remote rural area and has a very homely atmosphere in the Lounge.



Landlords Jason and Lisa Hudson said: "The pub may well have become another closed pub if we had not opened the shop in the former bar". They were nominated for the Award by two local people, Jeff and Carey Glynn-Jones. Jason told the judges when they visited that if the competition was based on footfall or profits they would not stand a chance, but in fact the award was about appreciation from the local community and the pub has received some excellent publicity. Jason said: "The Award is making a difference because people from further afield are coming to see what the delicatessen stocks". The judges enjoyed Lisa's own quiche for lunch, and her recipe will appear in the BBC's Good Food Magazine in June.

In the same competition, Halletts Real Cider of Crumlin, near Caerphilly, were awarded *Best Drinks Producer*.

# The Oxford Arms

Duke Street, Kington, Herefordshire  
HR5 3DR

Tel: 01544 230 322

[www.the-oxford-arms.co.uk](http://www.the-oxford-arms.co.uk)



*We run a traditional style pub offering good wholesome food all cooked on the premises using local produce and serve great local real ales, all from local businesses.*

### Food served

*Tue. - Thur. 6pm -9pm only*

*Fri & Sat. - 12noon-2.30pm & 6pm-9pm*

*Sunday Lunch - 12-2.30pm Roast only*

*One course - £7.50, Two courses - £10.50*

*Three courses - £13.50*

*Sunday Evening - 6pm - 8.30pm*

*Roast & Normal Menu*

*We are open all day on Fri, Sat & Sun*

*We are family and dog-friendly and you will always receive a warm friendly welcome from us and our staff.*

*Check our website/facebook page for our Beer festival and other upcoming events*

[www.the-oxford-arms.co.uk](http://www.the-oxford-arms.co.uk)

Michael Hudson, who has been working at the *NewRiver Retail*-owned **Horse & Jockey** in New Street, Ross since November, has now taken over as landlord. The opportunity occurred when former landlords Martyn and Jenny Clemson decided to focus their efforts on another pub in town that they run - the **King Charles II** in Broad Street. Mr Hudson said he wants to improve the Horse & Jockey's beer garden at the back and market it as a sports bar which will also offer live music. The beer is Wye Valley Butty Bach, plus a national beer from the likes of Doom Bar, Old Speckled Hen or Fullers London Pride.

Beers from Hereford's Wobbly Brewery continue to feature at the **Crown & Sceptre** in Ross, with the regular 4.8% ABV Wobbly Welder accompanied by another from the brewery's range. Now managed by Sonya Lawley, the pub is being made more welcoming, with additional tables and chairs, and wall paintings of local interest. To the rear, the outdoor terrace is being brought back into use, hopefully in time for a beer festival featuring Wobbly beers on June 25th.

Following the re-opening of the **Castle Inn** at Little Birch back in March, it can be reported that, after a few teething troubles, it is now up and running and selling beer (in the shape of Otter Ale) and pub food in the evenings. Tucked away down a maze of narrow lanes it's a fabulous venue for a summer's evening trip out. Opening times are 6-11 Wed; 12-3, 6-11 Thu-Fri; 12-11 Sat; 12-9 Sun. Booking is advised for meals on weekend evenings and Sunday lunchtime. The telephone no. is (01981) 540516.

Refurbishment work, including an entrance and new kitchens, at the **Full Pitcher** in Ledbury was nearing completion as the *Hopvine* went to press.

Under the new management of husband and wife team of Tim and Wendy Harris from the early part of this year, the **Retreat** in Ledbury has recently been refurbished with comfortable seating and bar areas. It is now supplying an increased range of cask ales, currently Fullers London Pride and two regularly changing guest beers, such as Old Speckled Hen and Black Sheep Best Bitter. Cider, both draught and bottled, is also available together with bottled craft and gluten-free beers.

Tim and Wendy are keen real ale fans and are going for full Cask Marque accreditation in the near future. The Retreat offers a range of traditional pub food plus specials and a good variety of

coffees and cakes during the day.

On the 20th May a new tenant took on the lease of the Admiral Tavern's-owned **Brewers Arms** at West Malvern. The pub, just a short distance over the Herefordshire-Worcestershire border, had become the subject of a community buy-out proposal following a short period of closure. The pub had previously struggled with two sets of licensees between them not lasting more than 200 days, since longstanding and popular landlady Sue Adamson retired back in September 2015. However, the buy-out has now gone on hold, as early signs are extremely encouraging from new landlady, Alison Maddrell, who originally hails from the Isle of Man. Beers include normally two from Malvern Hills Brewery and a number of guests, including at least one from Wye Valley. Lunchtime and evening food is anticipated to start in early June.

Popular licensees, Andy and Kim Lannie finally left the **Red Lion** at Stiffords Bridge on the 26<sup>th</sup> May - going out in some style with a well-attended final party night for locals and friends. The *Hopvine* sends them our very best wishes for the future, and thanks them for all their efforts in revitalising this sometimes flood-prone road-

side pub. They were awarded *Autumn Pub of The Season* as recently as last year, and held numerous successful beer festivals there over the years. As at the start of June, the Red Lion is closed, but it is believed that new tenants are expected to take over soon.

Since Dan Clarke and Jill Gordon bought the **Chase Inn** at Bishops Frome from Marston's Brewery last summer, things have gone from strength to strength for them as a family-run business. An extra handpump has joined the three originals on the bar - with the beer offer now consisting of two from Wye Valley; Otter Bitter, and a changing guest. However, the biggest improvements have been made outside, with the addition of a splendid new beer garden. Part-paved, part-lawned it offers a nice prospect looking out across the village green. The pub has also started doing live music, typically once or twice a month.

Following closure back in February the licence of the **Crown & Sceptre** in Bromyard, was surrendered. Four months on, a new licence has been issued to new licensees with earlier closing times at weekends in order to deal with noise problems.

## BAY HORSE INN KINGS ACRE ROAD, HEREFORD 6<sup>th</sup> BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> August  
5pm – late

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> August  
12 noon – late

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> August  
12 noon – 5pm

Live Music: Friday Night with Bad Spaniel  
Saturday Night with The Animators

BBQ, Pig Roast, Curry & Rice, Ice Creams,  
Bouncy Castle

**FREE ADMISSION**

On a visit in late May to the **White Lion** in Leominster, there was the very rare sight of Timothy Taylors Dark Mild on the bar (not something seen outside Yorkshire very often) as one of the two guest beers that accompany the permanent Wye Valley Butty Bach. From the middle of June onwards the pub's licensees, Sarah Anderson and Mervyn Mahoney, report they will start selling Lilly Littlelegs - a beer specially brewed for them by Leominster's Swan Brewery. The plan is that a percentage of each pint sold will be donated to Birmingham Children's Hospital, where their daughter is receiving ongoing long term treatment. Since a large tree was cut down, it has properly revealed the pub's fine garden which was the venue over the Spring Bank Holiday for a kiddies' Teddy Bear picnic, which came with free activities and lunch.

Still in Leominster, another place now selling the local Swan beers is the **Grape Vaults** on the town's Broad Street. A sixth handpump has ap-



peared on the bar and Swan Gold now joins the existing range of three beers from Ludlow, Woods Shropshire Lass and a guest in this gloriously unspoiled single-bar town pub, one which is reputed to have the smallest Gents loo in the county!

Now the weather is improving, long overdue refurbishment work has begun on the roof and exterior of the Wye Valley-owned **Chequers** in Leominster. As at the end of May there was scaffolding attached to the front of the pub, but it is still very much open for the sale of all of the Wye Valley range.

The **Hop Pole** in Leominster is currently closed and the lease is available to let via local estate agents, Jonathan Wright on (01568) 616666.

There's plenty of good news emanating from Ludlow these days. Following hot on the heels of the two micro-pubs that opened in the town around last Christmas - reported in the Spring Hopvine - comes news of another. Details

## 7TH BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL

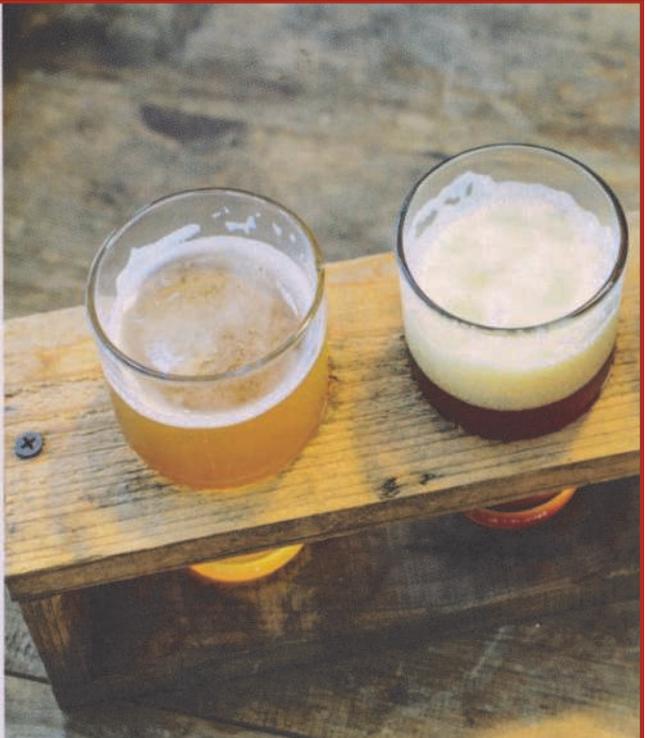
**The Boot Inn, Orleton  
Fri 29th - Sun 31st July**

A huge selection of Real Ales & Cider, live entertainment and music for the whole family all weekend.

**Tickets £10 for the weekend**

750 tickets available from The Boot Inn, Orleton. All other tickets will be sold on the door.

Band line-up, T&Cs & more info:  
[www.TheBootInnOrleton.co.uk](http://www.TheBootInnOrleton.co.uk)  
[FB.com/TheBootInnOrleton](https://www.facebook.com/TheBootInnOrleton)



are still sketchy at the moment, but the proposed premises are located on the town's Corve Street (roughly opposite the **Dog Hangs Well**) and is expected to open for business some time later in the year.

Still in Ludlow, Joules Brewery have made their first pub acquisition in the town. The brewery, which is based in Market Drayton in north Shropshire, has acquired the freehold of the **Rose & Crown** on Church Street. Joules now have over twenty pubs in their estate, spread mainly across Shropshire, Cheshire and into the West Midlands. Already major works are under way at what is claimed to be the town's oldest surviving pub. Gary Seymour, once famously licensee of the **Sun Inn** at Leintwardine and latterly employed at the town's Church Inn, has teamed up with Karl Heber-Smith. Karl will look after the kitchen whilst Gary looks after the beer. The plan is to stock the full range of Joules' beers (three regulars, plus a seasonal brew) as well as two guest ales, and food is expected to fall into the traditional pub food genre. Opening is targetted to be in early July, so keep an eye on our Facebook page and there will also be a full

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## A LITTLE SURPRISE IN STORE FOR LEDBURY AS TOWN'S

### WHITE LION IS SET TO BE RE-INVENTED

***A proposal to open the town's first micro-pub has been granted planning permission by Herefordshire Council.***

Ledbury is to gain its first micro-pub after local business-owner, Chris Solly, was recently granted planning permission by Herefordshire Council to convert vacant office accommodation in the town.

The micro-pub will be accommodated in vacant office premises in Bye Street, which were most recently used by *Age Concern* as an area office. However, long before that it was a pub - the White Lion - which is believed to have closed around 1960. Known affectionately in the past as just the Lion, it was this fact that has inspired Chris to name his new enterprise 'The Lion'.

With work to be done on the interior décor and toilet, it is anticipated it will open its doors to the public no later than the end of June. Plans are to keep it neat and simple and stock only brews from micro-breweries from the three counties of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire. It will also sell local cider. There will be no food.

Herefordshire CAMRA welcomes this initiative, and was happy to support the planning application. It will provide an important new independent outlet for locally-based brewers and cider-makers in Ledbury. There will be a full report on the opening in the next *Hopvine*.



The Lion returns – but this time as a micro-pub.

## ANOTHER NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

**Worcester's successful Firefly flutters across to join the fun in Hereford**



The continuing transformation of Hereford's pub scene doesn't look like letting up soon, with yet another new addition - this time in the form of the Firefly, which opened back in the beginning of May. Taking over the premises of what was once the Orange Tree pub (and latterly a steak restaurant of the same name), the re-titled and refurbished King Street venue is run by the very same crowd who own and run the Firefly in Worcester - a popular redbrick three-storey affair situated on the city's Lowesmoor. Some of you will know it.

The ornate and original tiled floors and fine wooden panelling so synonymous with the old Orange Tree are still very much in evidence, but the décor is now much more dark and moodier. Brightly contrasting button-backed velour upholstered seats; a wall-mounted stag's head, and background music create a contemporary ambience. However, whilst being undeniably at the trendy end of the pub spectrum, the place still appeals to a wide cross-section of pub-goers - certainly this appeared to be the case when the *Hopvine* team recently ambushed the Firefly's owner, Matthew Pugh, there on a busy Saturday evening.

While we cast our eyes furtively across to the bar with its central six handpumps (featuring four real beers and two real ciders), plus two arrays either side (each of five keg craft beer fonts), Matthew shared his thoughts with the *Hopvine*: "I'd previously never really thought about Hereford as a location for my next pub, but on a recent visit, after I hadn't been here for ten years or more, I was impressed as to how much the city had changed for the better. I felt it was now the sort of place that would appreciate the Firefly." And judging by the numbers of customers he and his team have already welcomed through the door, his judgement looks to have been spot on.



The real beers are ever-changing, but they do try and always have a brew on from the award-winning Tiny Rebel Brewery from Newport. They also offer a bottled and canned beer menu, which features over 60 different beers - not just those from the UK, but also from the likes of Belgium, Germany, Spain, Japan and the USA.

'Mad Snacks' is the Firefly's bold take on food, with snacks such as Pulled Pork Burger, Black Bean Burger and a Mad Dog (it's a hot dog) at one end of the spectrum at £6 a pop, whilst at the other extreme are a variety of whole chicken dishes (including an interesting-sounding Cider Chicken) for four persons to share at £30. It looks like both quality and imagination have gone into the food offer.

Already they've had DJ's in to do their stuff and there's an open mic night once a month, with the promise of more regular live music to come. Clearly this place is going to keep shouting from the rooftops. However, it is refreshing to not only see another new pub open in the city, but one where everyone can enjoy the zeitgeist of our evolving pub culture without feeling either awkward or out of place. We can be grateful that pubs, even the new Firefly, are still a place for all of us to enjoy.

*The Firefly, 16 King Street, Hereford, HR4 9BX. Open Mon-Thu 12-11.30; Fri & Sat 12-1.30; Sun 12-11. Food served 12-9. Telephone (01432) 358252 Facebook [firefly.hereford](https://www.facebook.com/firefly.hereford)*

## NO LONGER IN THE BALANCE

***New future for village inn after previous long decline and closure***

It was very welcome news a few months ago to learn that the Balance Inn at Luston had been bought by new owners, who were keen to make a proper go of it as a village pub. Driving through Luston over the past fifteen years has been steadily more depressing, as the Balance slowly deteriorated in condition and trade, and eventually closed a few years ago in sad circumstances.

That's now all in the past. The grand re-opening was timed for the early Spring Bank Holiday, May 2nd. Immediately striking was the new paint job inside and out, and the new garden furniture, plus some nice touches inside – a barrel table with a top carved with the Balance logo, and clean and fresh lines to the bar and sun lounge. At last someone was clearly intent on investing in the Inn as a business after years of neglect – to the relief of the locals.

So who is Luston's knight in shining armour? Who engineered this dramatic change? Forgive the clunky link, but there is one, as new owner, Colin Ravenshill, used to own and run an engineering business in Redditch. He retired over five years ago and had been living the 'good life' on a small holding in northern France. It sounds idyllic from his brief description of walking down to the beach with a bottle of Muscadet, and prizing and eating the oysters fresh from the rocks, while the sun set and his dog frolicked in the sand. However, all was not quite perfect as Elizabeth, his wife, was homesick and so they decided to come back to the home country. Colin had looked around for opportunities to invest in a pub, among other things, and alighted on the Balance Inn for what he believes are sound business reasons: a catchment area of 600 people; no other pub within walking distance (the next nearest is 2.5 miles away), and that magic 'potential'. It certainly has that.



Keeping the Balance: Daniel Raybould and Roxanne

Colin's stepson, Daniel Raybould, is now the licensee and is an experienced ex-pub manager from M&B. The family live on the premises and the business model is to build trade by becoming an integral part of the village - being open most hours; offering a range of well-kept beer, plus serving up good, locally-sourced pub food. So far, so good, with a sensible range of local cask ales on offer (Hobsons Best Bitter, Wye Valley Butty Bach, Swan Amber, and a guest – they're looking to try Snowdonia Purple Moose shortly). Daniel had previously achieved Cask Marque accreditation with his managed pubs elsewhere and intends to meet the same standard at the Balance Inn.

On the flip-side to all this positivity, the owner, Colin, knew there were issues with the premises – a lot of basic repair work was needed on the building's structure and roof, and some unexpected costs popped up (new gas boilers were needed), but all those essentials have been dealt with. Before the end of June they're hoping to get the restaurant area fully refurbished to increase their food offering, which was fairly limited at first (steaks, burgers and mixed grills, plus fish & chips every Friday). It's a very good sign that they've been so keen to get the business up and running as soon as possible and have hit their deadlines so far. Reassuring is that there has been a lot of support from the village and Colin and his family are very grateful for that. It bodes well for the future of the pub if the locals are fully behind it. All in all, very much a good news story in these difficult times for village pubs.

*The Balance Inn, Luston, HR6 0EB. Opening 11-11 daily. Telephone (01568) 616801. Website tbc. Bus service 490/491/494*



## A NEW STAR RISES IN THE FAR NORTH EAST

***Having faded away over recent years, the Baiting House is now back in the reckoning following what can only be described as a sensational refurbishment.***

Located in the far north east of the county, on the B4203 Bromyard to Martley road (just short of the Worcestershire border), is the Baiting House. This time last year it was closed, run-down and its future far from certain. Step in local couple, Kate Lane and Andrew Cornthwaite, to buy the premises. But that wasn't the end of it - not by a long way. There have been reports in past *Hopvines* covering a number of very high-quality restorations and refurbishments, including the likes of the Live & Let Live at Bringsty Common; the Kilpeck Inn at Kilpeck, and more recently the Oak at Wigmore and the Monk at Monkland. However, what has been achieved at the Baiting House probably trumps all of them. The end result has to be seen to be properly appreciated.

The pub has been completely dismantled and reassembled with equal doses of passion, imagination and flair. No expense appears to have been spared with the use of materials: the ubiquity too often seen today with the choice of construction materials has been shunned completely in the creation of quality spaces inside and out that have delivered a first class pub.

Outside, the pub's two signature gable-end bay windows still stand proud to greet one on arrival, as does the traditional stone-built pub, with its delightfully quirky steep-pitched tiled roof and old red-brick chimneys. In stark contrast, the inside has been totally transformed. Gone is the dowdy interior, and in its place are now three very different rooms (plus another three that are currently work in progress). You enter either on the level from the extensive and newly laid-out car park or via a flight of twelve steps from a patio area. Inside is split across four distinct levels (the pub is on a hill) - two of the rooms are conventional bars and another is a light and airy conservatory-style dining room with



Against the clock - Beth Turner and Tim Lawson make last minute adjustments prior to opening



Licensee Tim Lawson comes with a pedigree from the nearby Bridge Inn

views out across the patio into the beautifully landscaped hillside garden. With varying ceiling heights from room to room; clean matt plaster wall finishes competing with some bare brickwork sections; stone-flagged floors, and much original timber-work, the pub's interior engenders differing atmospheres: ranging from convivial mixing to intimate gathering. To the side of the pub is a separate annexe. Called the Clubhouse, it has bench seating; a jukebox, and a large TV (with pull-down screen) - an ideal facility intended for locals to watch major sporting events and the like without taking over the rest of the pub.

At the helm of the revitalised Baiting House (as licensee) is Tim Lawson, latterly of the Bridge Inn at Stanford Bridge - itself just a couple of

miles up the road in Worcestershire. Tim made his reputation at the Bridge Inn for his successful Bridge Bash Festivals, as much as he did for his beer. However, judging by the hoards at the Baiting House on a Spring Bank Holiday opening weekend, it looks like he is going to make a big success of this place too. There were plenty sat out on the patio, whilst frolicking dogs and children amused themselves without getting under people's feet in the extensive garden beyond.

Five beers feature on the bar, including those from Hobsons, Otter Wye Valley and a guest. The bar menu offers a limited range of what might best be described as British Pub Classics, while the restaurant menu leans more towards fine dining.

The fact that there were so many people eating shouldn't be a surprise as the pub's kitchen is in the more than capable hands of Charles Bradley, who was previously the chef at Ludlow's Mr Underhill's.

However, this place isn't just about the food - far from it. As Tim shared with the Hopvine: "It's a pub with a dining room, not a soulless gastro-pub. We still want to do pub stuff." This is evidenced by the fact the investment has been to the same level back-of-house, with the beer cellar also being refitted. The pub also boasts six letting rooms.

With the pub on a hillside amongst open fields and patches of mature woodland, Tim added: "It's not just a great place to have a pub, but it's also a great place to live." But he isn't resting on his laurels in such bucolic surroundings, as there is work to do and things to organise. There's the likelihood of a beer and cider festival as early as this August, and planning permission already exists for twelve glamping pods in the grounds. It looks like things are only going to get better still at the Baiting House.

*Baiting House, Upper Sapey, WR6 6XT. Open Mon-Sat 12-11; Sun 12-10.30. Food served: Tue-Sat 12-2.30, 6-9; Sun 12-3. Telephone (01886) 853201. Website: [www.baitinghouse.co.uk](http://www.baitinghouse.co.uk)*

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## ALMA'S LEGACY IN SAFE HANDS

*Award-winning Linton pub picks up first award under new ownership.*



Mark Haslam presents the certificate to Gemma and Dan Evans

It was rather apposite that Dan & Gemma Evans of the Alma Inn at Linton were awarded the **Summer Pub of the Season** certificate in late May as shafts of bright evening sunlight burst through into the main bar.

The Alma Inn is a great pub any time of the year, but especially so on a summer's evening. Inside, you'll find five beers on the bar (including one each from Butcombe and Malvern Hills breweries) and always a warm welcome. But it's the outside that is definitely more interesting. Each June solstice weekend, in the pub's extensive grounds, is held the Linton Music Festival - which these days you're just as likely to hear mentioned on BBC Radio 2 alongside

the likes of Austen's South By South West Festival as well as numerous other UK music festivals. (this year Suzi Quatro heads the line-up). And on a smaller scale, and with perhaps a passing nod to the RHS Chelsea Garden Show, part of the pub's large rear car park has been converted into a very pleasant garden area - complete with a lawn - so there's now somewhere to enjoy the sunshine without being too far from the bar.

In presenting the award, Herefordshire CAMRA's Mark Haslam, said that Dan and Gemma had a hard act to follow, after they bought the Alma in early 2015 from previous owners who had amassed many CAMRA awards. However, in the process of very much making the place their own since then, they have successfully introduced improvements without either spoiling the pub's friendly and intimate atmosphere, nor by alienating their many loyal locals. The reaction from customers appears to have been universally positive, both to changes to the pub's decor and the introduction of pub food for the first time. Mark Haslam said: "Dan and Gemma are to be commended for taking all their customers with them on their journey of change and improvement. This is the first award for the Alma Inn under their stewardship, but I fancy it won't be the last. Well done for all their efforts."

*Alma Inn, Linton HR9 7RY. Open Mon 6-11; Tue-Sat 12-3, 6-11; Sun 12-3, 7-10.30. Food served Tue-Sat 12-2, 6-9. Telephone: (01989) 720355. Website: [www.almainnlinton.co.uk](http://www.almainnlinton.co.uk)*

## CHASE INN TAKES SILVER

**Upper Colwall pub pipped by Shrewsbury's Prince of Wales in Round 2 of Pub of the Year**

Herefordshire's *Pub of the Year*, the Chase Inn at Upper Colwall was voted runner-up in the Marches Area round of the CAMRA West Midlands competition. The winner was the Prince of Wales, a lively back-street pub in Shrewsbury. The Chase saw off three other contenders, from Bridgnorth, Market Drayton and Telford CAMRA branches.

**Correction:** A caption error crept into the Spring edition of the *Hopvine*, where the presentation of the certificate for Herefordshire CAMRA *Pub of the Year 2015* was described as going to the previous landlady Joanne Walker rather than Charlotte Davies (pictured with Andrew Pearson) - our sincere apologies go to Charlotte and Joanne.



LOCAL CIDER NEWS

**Newton Court Cider** is hoping to be exporting its cider to North America. Recognising the phenomenal growth of the US market – cider sales are up 500 percent in five years, and the relative scarcity of English-style ciders, the Leominster-based producer has set about raising its profile on the other side of the Atlantic. Apart from attending *CiderCon 2016*, they also submitted to the Great Lakes International Cider and Perry Competition (GLINTCAP) held annually in Grand Rapids, Michigan winning Silver for Gasping Goose (Cider) and Bronze for Panting Partridge (Perry).

GLINTCAP also held success for **Oliver's Cider & Perry**. The Ocle Pychard producer is a regular contender and this year picked up two silvers - Classic Perry and Gold Rush #4 (Cider), plus a bronze for its Yarlinton Mill Cider

Tenbury Wells cider producer, **Oldfields Orchard**, launched its newest product in May at Ludlow Spring Festival. Made using locally grown Discovery apples, the result is a very crisp, clean and light drink. Originally to be

called Discovery Cider, it was found after fermentation to be more like a sparkling wine in character than a traditional cider. Consequently it has been rebranded as 'Applesecco', and packaged the in imported Italian bottles.

EVENTS

Local Cider festivals are listed on page 41 together with beer festivals.

**17th July:** Its 'Opera in the Barn' when the acclaimed *Popup Opera* company returns to Broome Farm with a performance of the farcical comedy *The Barber of Seville*. Website [Ross Cider](http://RossCider.com) (see below)

**1st-2nd October:** The Yew Tree Inn at Peters-tow hosts a new event this year. Titled the *Height of Harvest Festival*, it will combine two days of apple pressing and cider tasting with live music. Displays of cider apples and perry pears vintage cider presses. Live demonstrations include morris dancing and wassailing, blacksmithing and spinning alongside craft stalls. Camping is available at Broome Farm. [www.rosscider.com](http://www.rosscider.com)

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## COMPETITION ROUND-UP

## CAMRA CIDER &amp; PERRY COMPETITION

## CIDER

GOLD – Harding's 3 Peace Sweet (Cambridgeshire)

SILVER – Dunkertons Cider (Herefordshire)

BRONZE – Green Valley Cyder (Devon)

## PERRY

GOLD – Hartland's Farmhouse Perry (Gloucs)

SILVER – Burnard's Stray Perry (Norfolk)

BRONZE – Hecks Perry (Somerset)

It was second place for **Dunkertons** Cider in CAMRA's National Cider and Perry Championships. The competition, held at the *Reading Beer & Cider Festival*, featured ciders and perries from across the UK. The specially chosen panel of experienced judges, drinks writers and CAMRA members judged each cider and perry on its individual taste, aroma, flavour, after-taste and overall appeal. Dunkertons have been invited to receive their award at the *Beer on the Wye* trade session on 8th July.

Winner of the Cider Gold medal was 3 Peace Sweet produced in Cambridgeshire by St Neots-based Harding's Cider, which the judges described as "possessing an aroma of ripe dessert apples"... "it's a truly 'appley' cider, and has a flavour that's fresh and summery with plenty of crisp bite".

The Perry Gold medal was won by a former gold medalist - Hartland's, a small family operation based in North Gloucestershire by Derek Hartland. Hartland's Farmhouse Perry was described as having a sherry, raisin and fruit-cake aroma, and being a refreshing drink with a lingering sweetness.

## BIG APPLE

Herefordshire winners were **Oliver's Cider and Perry** (*Bottle Fermented/Conditioned Cider*); Bartestree Cider Co (*Draught Sweet Perry*); Ross-on-Wye Cider and Perry Co (*Draught Medium Perry*).

Herefordshire's **Once Upon A Tree** (Putley) and **Williams & Hughes** (Cradley) shared first place with Williams Brothers following a procedural error in the judging of the Draught Medium Cider Class.

Caerphilly-based Williams Brothers also shared

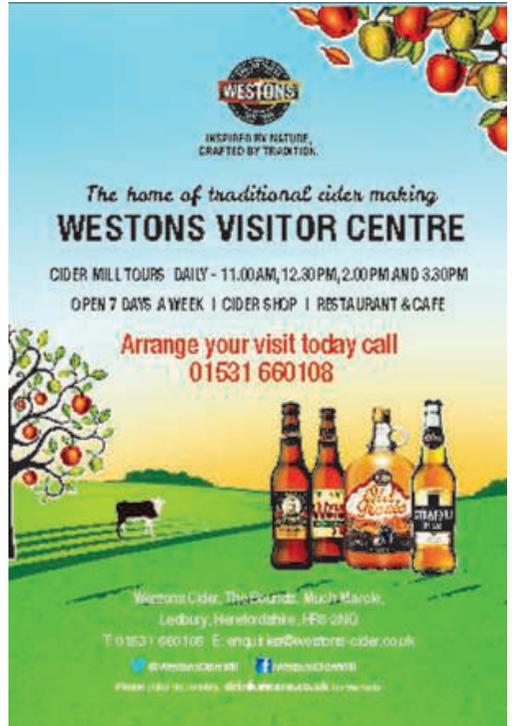
the Champion Cidermaker award with Ragged Stone, located just over the county border at Bromsberrow in Gloucestershire

## INTERNATIONAL CIDER &amp; PERRY COMPETITION

It proved a golden year for Golden Valley producers at this year's International Cider and Perry Competition hosted by Hereford's Cider Museum. **Pips Cider** from Dorstone - a small family business whose apples are grown without sprays or pesticides, and picked by hand - won first prize in the dry cider, medium and sweet cider categories, while Abbeydore-based Gwatkin Cider topped the dry perry class.

**Roger Pinnell** (Upper Dormington) collected two Firsts with **Oliver's Cider & Perry** (Ocle Pychard) and **King Offa** (Leominster) completing the county's category winners.

Despite Herefordshire's success in eight of the twelve categories it was the winner of the Single Variety Cider class entered by Thatchers Cider from Somerset that went on to become the overall winner.



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## PERRY GOES TO AMERICA

Tom Oliver represented Herefordshire at CiderCon 2016 in Portland, Oregon



"The most pleasurable, informative and exhilarating week I have spent around cider" was how Tom Oliver summed up his whirlwind nine-day excursion to Portland, Oregon for CiderCon 2016 that left him "gasping for air and hoarse."

Just as the Spring *Hopvine* was going to press, the text of Tom Oliver's blog on CiderCon 2016 landed on the editorial desk. The Pacific North West city of Portland, Oregon was an ideal venue. As well as being the cider capital of the USA it is famous for its microbreweries, street food and general counterculture. Over 1,000 people attended talks, seminars, tastings, held over five days in February, with a wealth of extra-curricular events at night.

"It was a truly energising event, for people who had cider running through their veins. Orchard-

ists, cider makers, cider sellers, cider distributors, cider importers, cider writers, cider bloggers and all focused on getting as much out of the week as possible" said Tom.

The USACM (*US Association of Cider Makers*) had engaged Bill Bradshaw (*The Worlds Best Ciders* and *The Enthusiast's Manual*) to curate a finale under the guise of 'British Cider Traditions'. Bill needed three UK cidemakers that covered the regions and had distribution in the USA - and they also needed to be happy standing up in front of the entire cider-making fraternity of the USA while tasting their ciders. Barny Butterfield of Sandford Orchards in Devon, Neil Worley of Worley's Cider in Somerset and Tom fitted the bill.

"I touched down in Portland PDX to meet up with my good friend and fellow cider maker from *Angry Orchard*, Ryan Burk. We shared a taxi to the Hilton and headed straight for the bar and I guess never stopped talking till we left seven days later, Ryan heading back to the Angry's superb new facility in the Hudson Valley in upstate New York and me for Ocle Pychard in England and lambing."



After a short sleep and breakfast at Anna's Thai - one of Portland's famed food trucks - Tom managed to finish off his perry presentation and download it to the CiderCon website. Then it was time to register at the conference and meet up with Bill Bradshaw to talk tactics for the tasting.

"Already I could tell the voice was going to take a hammering. So many people, all wanting to talk about cider and everything under the sun." Amongst those many people were Moira Davidson of Newton Court Cider and Anna Bird from Pixley Berries, both in Herefordshire.



Also present was Greg Hall of *Virtue Cider*, Michigan with whom Oliver's collaborate annually to produce Gold Rush, a twice-fermented cider homage to lambic ferments. "The 2016 #4 is the best yet. So drinkable but massive tannins and a good dose of what is unaffectionately

known as 'band aid' in the US. The true expression of bittersweet phenolics that is just a tough ask for those not familiar with true cider apples and wild yeasts."

## REVEREND NAT'S HARD CIDER

THE APPLE'S DEEPEST PURPOSE REALIZED

While most delegates went off on organised trips, Tom stayed in Portland to visit Nat West of *Reverend Nat's Hard Cider* - maker of "some excellent, beautifully balanced ciders, full of the most exotic and unique ingredients". Nat has a store of 10-year old Oliver's Cider and it was time to find out if a lightly-sulphited, sterile-filtered cider would still be drinkable 10 years on. Later, on the Wednesday evening, the answer was revealed, not in private, but along with hundreds of others in a very public advertised event at Rev Nat's Taproom. According to Tom "The verdict was ..... yes, it was and still is very drinkable, some cider!"

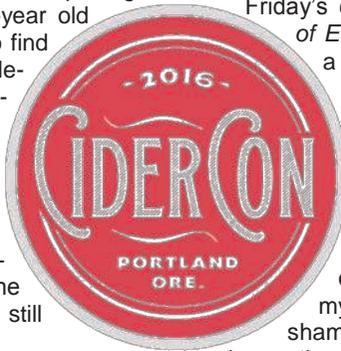
Tom's perry presentation was in front of a packed, standing-room-only crowd who, for the most part had probably never tasted perry made solely with perry pears before. "The difficulty for me was always going to be keeping to my allotted time of just 30 minutes. This was as near as I have ever got to a scripted presentation! It was a great experience for me and, I



Tom's smile says it all! Tom with the ladies of the Pomme Boots Society formed to unite the women working in the cider industry.

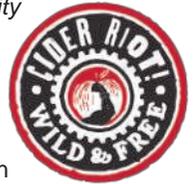
hope, for all who attended." Tom had brought along his Herefordshire bottle-conditioned Perry and Classic Perry.

The serious business of the conference involved a large number of seminars, illustrated by those which Tom attended: Distributor Views on Cider in 2016; Pasteurization Techniques; Building a Cider Business in Devon; Analytical Approaches to Hard Cider Production; Social Media for Cideries; Going Wild; and Cheese & Cider Pairings.



Friday's event was described as a *Taste of English Cider*. Tom reports "It was a magnificent celebration of cider on both sides of the Atlantic. The UK with its traditions and heritage and its myriad of bitter-sweet cider apples meeting the force and energy of the youthful re-emerging US and Canadian cider industry, fuelled by constantly evolving ciders with a myriad of ingredients and the no-shame-in-failure approach that allows innovation to explode."

Friday concluded at the new premises of *Cider Riot* on the East side of Portland with Dorset-based band *The Skimmity Hitchers* who were touring North America with the help of Tom's sponsorship. You can experience their cider-fuelled scrumpy and western when they headline at Beer on the Wye on July 9th.



Tom summed up "We left Portland relishing the energy, the emerging skills and the wonderful mix of people involved with cider in the USA and Canada. We felt total solidarity, unified by the burning question on both sides of the Atlantic *Just what is cider?*"

The full text of Tom Oliver's blog, complete with links to all the characters mentioned - and many more - may be found at

<https://oliversciderandperry.co.uk/blog>

*Olivers have recently been successful in competitions, including GLINTCAP and the Big Apple. Details on pages 20/21.*

## SILLY PUB GAMES

***Planning applications to convert Hereford's Broadleys and Ross's Riverside Inn into a Co-op convenience store and housing respectively, have both been recently withdrawn - but it isn't quite the good news it should be.***

On the surface of it this should be great news: two pubs no longer the subject of planning applications that would have seen them permanently lost to the communities that rely on them. We should all be raising a glass to celebrate, but this is all part of a game played by developers – a very cruel and cynical game. Let us explain.

Our planning system has always been heavily loaded in favour of the applicant, particularly where they are property developers with money and time to spend on slick planning consultants and other professionals - support that isn't available to those on the other side in a fight to save a cherished local pub. Those locals wishing to object only have three weeks to write to the planners, whilst the applicant has all the time in the world to prepare and present their arguments in however many expert reports and documents they deem appropriate to provide to the planners. They also get to decide the timing of their application submission, and if it doesn't look like it's going their way (perhaps too many people have objected, despite the very short timescale) then they can just withdraw the application. This then wipes the slate clean – at a stroke all the objections are discarded – and we start all over again with a new application. And, surprise, surprise, the “new” application invariably has a number of startling similarities to the original one!

It is partly because of this gross inequality of our planning system that CAMRA is moved to get involved in pub campaigns, trying at least to redress some of the injustice by helping local communities fight back to save their valued pubs. This has been the case recently for two county pubs.

### **Better than another Co-op**

The Broadleys on Hereford's Ross Road has become a cause célèbre of pub campaigns after pub-owners, *NewRiver Retail* applied back in January 2015 to convert the popular community pub into a Co-op convenience store – despite the fact there is another Co-op store just a few hundred yards further along the road. The locals soon got organised and the fightback was fast and fierce. However, since then the planning application (right up to May 2016) had sat with Herefordshire Council's planners for sixteen months without a decision. During this time, *NewRiver's* planning agents had been repeatedly requesting (and obtaining) time extensions to the determination deadline from the planners (a facility not ordinarily afforded to those objecting to an application).

The reasons for these extensions included the need by *NewRiver* to satisfy the Highways Agency that the proposition is a safe one. Back in February 2015, the Highways Agency blocked

the Broadleys application over concerns they had regarding vehicular access to and from the pub, which is located on top of busy road junction on the city's Ross Road (see photo). At the same time, Herefordshire CAMRA produced in a week an independent traffic survey which demonstrated how completely Mickey Mouse the applicant's traffic “assessment” was. Subsequently, *NewRiver*



Wacky Races: the view looking away from the car park exit at the Broadleys.

were asked to provide a proper survey and assessment, but none has been forthcoming. Meanwhile, so much time has elapsed that the Highways Agency has since become Highways England!

As yet another time extension deadline came and went at the end of April this year, CAMRA decided enough was enough. The council's planners were asked if it is fair on those people that rely on the Broadleys for their livelihood, jobs and social amenity for this to just keep dragging on and on with no conclusion in sight? Despite *NewRiver Retail* going on record and stating that they were always keen to let people know where they stood, this doesn't appear to be the case at all. Subsequently, Herefordshire planners wrote to the *NewRiver's* planning agent and explained they would make a determination on the application on the 20<sup>th</sup> May. The application was then promptly withdrawn.

The expectation now is that *NewRiver Retail* will later be back with another identical (or near-identical) planning application. Probably some time in the summer – perhaps hoping the August holiday period would be good as there might be fewer objections with people being away? As far as we know *NewRiver* have still to let those who work at the pub, and the community who rely on it know what their intentions are. So, it's business as usual there. However, CAMRA can let it be known that they can expect strong objections when a second application does come forward.

### Here's one we made earlier

Moving south from Hereford, the last *Hopvine* reported on a planning application to convert the closed Riverside Inn on Ross's Wye Street into three houses. Like with the Broadleys, this didn't go down too well and it was promptly withdrawn by the applicant after a number of well-argued objections were received, including one from a previous landlord who previously ran the place successfully, and was happy to share his view that it could be made to work and the current owners ought first to offer it for sale as a pub (something the owners have so



Riverside Inn: two planning applications in as many months

far declined to do). Following the withdrawal of the first application in May, a new one appeared with quite indecent haste [Perhaps it's one they made earlier? *Ed*].

### Half of zero at the Riverside

This new proposal envisages converting roughly half of the pub premises into housing and leaving the residual area of the building as "a pub". Unfortunately, this creates a fundamental contradiction. In the owners' previous (now withdrawn) application, they went to great lengths to put on record how the pub was financially non-viable as a business. Now they are asking us to believe that half of a non-viable pub can somehow, magically, become a viable business. We were always taught in school maths lessons that half of zero is still zero. So, maybe it's just smoke and mirrors? Perhaps the owners are hoping the locals won't be bothered to object this time? Wear 'em down and they'll go away – an age-old developers' ruse. However, we feel confident they are going to be disappointed again this time, but then it might be they've got third, fourth and fifth planning applications already waiting in the wings?

These people seem happy playing cynical games to get to their end objective, but rest assured CAMRA is 100% behind those communities who will once again resist the threat posed to their valued pubs. It should be noted they are not going to go away and the democratic process must ultimately prevail.

## PARKING MAD! LOCALS' VERDICT ON NEWTOWN OFFER

**“Compromise offer” of renting pub car park declined by Parish Council as Newtown Inn planning dispute moves to court.**

One of Herefordshire's longest ever running pub planning sagas is about to head to the courts for (hopefully) its final resolution, as locals fighting to see the Newtown Inn at Lower Eggleton reopened took to the pages of the Hereford Times to respond to an earlier article that majored on the largely self-inflicted plight of the pub's owners.

In that original *Hereford Times* article (published on the 7th April) the owners are quoted saying that they wanted the “uncertainty to end”, this following a four-year impasse with locals and planners, during which they converted the roadside pub into a private house without first obtaining planning permission.

### Do as you fancy

In arguing their defence in the HT article, they state that Herefordshire Council planners were aware of their conversion plans beforehand and had given them permission to “do anything we like with the footprint of the building.” However,

from extensive experience of planning matters gleaned over the decades it would come as a surprise to CAMRA to learn that Herefordshire Council really had instigated such a radical do-as-you-fancy planning policy. It will be interesting to see what emerges in court.

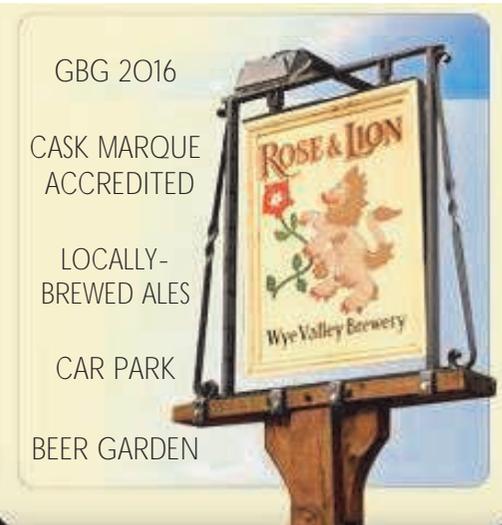
The pub-owners go on to say that they are not going to give the pub away, although no-one seems to be expecting them to do that. Having bought the business and associated land for a snip at £135,000 back in 2012, it can be argued there isn't too much financial exposure involved. They also make the point that it is their home - which is absolutely true - but they then omit to mention it is also still a pub, a most inconvenient truth that must haunt them daily, as they face legal proceedings by Herefordshire Council for failure to comply with the planning regulations.

In reply to these claims, local resident and frustrated pub-user, Steve Kirkby, in a letter published in the HT on the 28<sup>th</sup> April, pointed out that the local community has waited patiently for the planning process to conclude. He stated further that: “If the hole they [the owners] are in now is getting bigger, then stop digging, stop the uncertainty as to when the community will have its facility back and sell up”.

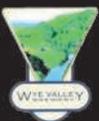
On the matter of the price for the property he states: “They purchased the property which was marketed as a pub and at a much reduced price”, adding further: “The property price is now likely to be less than what they paid for it because they have made alterations that detract from it being a pub.” Of course, those alterations were undertaken without planning permission and it is understood that, despite advice from council planning officers at the time that any such work could ultimately prove to be abortive and would be at their own financial risk, they continued with it regardless.

### Surreal Comedy

The most bizarre aspect of the whole article concerns reference made by the pub-owners to a “compromise offer” they had previously made to the Parish Council. In the past there were



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more than wry smiles when, demonstrating their unique surreal comedy prowess, they claimed in their submission to the planning inspector at their appeal that the nearby petrol station could provide a suitable alternative to the pub. Ah yes, of course, mine's a pint of unleaded and a packet of crisps, please.

But this offer even eclipsed that absurdity. They seem almost wounded that their "compromise offer" to rent the pub's car park out to the parish council in the absence of the pub was declined. Quite how a car park makes up for the loss of a village pub remains totally unclear. Surely, a

glass of gravel sat in one's car just doesn't have the same bonhomie as a good pint of beer with friends sat in front of a roaring fire. And it doesn't even have a disabled space either!

The owners of the Newtown Inn have consistently sought to portray themselves as the unfortunate victims in this case. But the stark cold immutable facts are that they bought a pub, one that the selling agent confirmed in correspondence had significant interest from other licensed operators, and one where the original sales particulars repeatedly state that planning permission is necessary to convert it into a private residence. They then failed to get retrospective planning permission, then subsequently had their appeal to the Secretary of State rejected. How clear does it need to be for them to understand?

It is not the owners who are the victims in this case. The real victims are the local community who have been deprived of their valued local pub for the past four years - they have been very patient, too patient in fact. It is now in everyone's interest that this is all finally concluded. There is currently no date set for the court hearing.

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# A RIGHT ROARING RADNORSHIRE TONGUE-TWISTER

*A new multi-venue and multi-national beer festival was simply too much to let pass by*

The occasion of the very first *Kington & Radnor Cross-Border Beer Festival* over the Easter weekend seemed to be as good an excuse as any to get away from bank holiday repeats on TV. Thus it was on Easter Saturday the *Great Escape* and various Bond films went unwatched as a contingent from Herefordshire CAMRA set forth from the city on a Sargeants no.461 bus heading for New Radnor - just across the Welsh border from Kington. This wasn't only a multi-venue beer festival (with five Kington pubs participating, along with three in Radnorshire), but it was a multi-national affair too. With such a tongue-twister as a title, it soon acquired the much snappier name – the KRCBBF. See, that's much easier to remember!



The wind and rain hasn't yet arrived as the party scramble aboard a bus in Kington

The majority of the party had been persuaded by festival organiser and Kington-based Herefordshire CAMRA member, Geoff Cooper, to gather at 10.30am in New Radnor for a five-mile walk across the hills. Without seriously thinking about it, and at a more superficial level that sounded like a splendid proposition, so it was we set off in overcast, but generally bright conditions from the Radnorshire Arms, a place to which we would be returning later for very different reasons.



The Radnorshire wet-look

It was tantamount to liquid machine-gun fire. It certainly wasn't the usual 'wet and windy' we had come to associate with a day out at a beer festival.

Arrival, completely bedraggled, at the Forest Inn couldn't come soon enough. With the f-freezing rain and wind, it was easy to understand where the pub's name got its twin f's from - and some of us thought it was Welsh spelling! Sat on a road junction high up on the A44, the tongue-twisting theme developed further at the Fforest, when it was learned the pub is in Llanfihangel-Nant-Melan. It was now 2-0 to the tongue-twisters.

Early on we ambled past a building that was once New Radnor railway station, in the process hoping to catch our collective breaths before the steep ascent on to the somewhat sinisterly-named Smatcher. It seems inconceivable today that trains once stopped at what is now a caravan park, but then the station closed to passengers as far back as in 1951 - and even when it was open there were only four trains a day. Not quite Clapham Junction then!

## Horse-whipping and machine gun fire

The climb to the top took its toll, with one member of the party returning downhill for an early start at the bar, but hardier souls pressed on with Geoff, our indefatigable and merciless walk-leader, leading from the front and his partner (and partner in crime) Patsy horse-whipping from the rear. Then as we broke on to level open ground at the very top, the weather opened up. It was the best the Welsh hills had to offer: withering and relentless horizontal rain with gale-force winds to match.

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Th5 Th7 Fr3 Fr11 Sa5 Sa9 Sa10 Sa11 Su2

...and one visits a cider farm: Fr6

See ad on page XX

## Warm Bosom

Enveloped into the warm and welcoming bosom of this isolated roadside inn, with its log-burning fires and comfortable furniture, we soon settled down to bowls of piping hot soup and the first of quite a few beers. However, before we had sufficient time to properly dry our socks, an hour had elapsed and it was time to brave the fierce weather at the bus stop.

New Radnor was the next call, in particular the brewery tap of the appropriately-named Radnorshire Brewery - which had specifically opened for the beer festival weekend. The party soon found themselves sheltered inside a slightly ramshackle, but nonetheless very charming old barn – in the company of some comfy old sofas; a certifiably-mad sheep dog, and no less than four of the brewery's excellent beers perched on a makeshift-looking bar.



Roll out the barrels at the Radnorshire Arms

Next up was New Radnor's last and only pub – the Radnorshire Arms. Sadly, it was due to close in the week or so following the beer festival, although through no fault of publicans Steve and Gaye Dunn (latterly of the Olde Tavern in Kington and the now-defunct Dunn Plowman Brewery). Here were a selection of seven beers, including four in casks on the bar – two of which were Dunn Plowman recipes brewed specially by the neighbours at Radnorshire Brewery. Discussion over a pint or two included the subject of how the loss of the pub would mean a former county town no longer having any pub at all (New Radnor was at one time the county town of Radnorshire). As sobering as that thought was, it wasn't sufficient to interrupt the drinking and thus it was we soon joined a bus to Kington.

Who says buses don't take you from door to door? Once back across the border and passports checked, we were literally dropped at the threshold of the Swan on the Square (formerly Kington's Swan Hotel). Here we uncovered a further four beers, including two from Leominster's brand spanking new Swan Brewery – namely, Swan Amber and Swan Gold. What was particularly striking was how



KRCBBF Festival organisers Patsy & Geoff Cooper at the Olde Tavern, with licensee Dave James

different the beers were in character and taste from those that brewery-owner, Jimmy Swan once brewed when he was previously Head Brewer at Wye Valley.

## Ye Olde Proper visit

No proper visit to Kington can ever be deemed complete without paying homage to the town's real living marvel: the Olde Tavern on Victoria Street. Still as timeless as ever, and apparently in safe new hands, a convivial late afternoon atmosphere was complemented by four beers: Dartmoor Legend; Hobson's Mild; the unusual Steampunk from Three Tuns, and Hook Norton's Hop To It - the last of

which was also the beer of choice on the previous call at the town's Royal Oak.

A final call was made at the welcoming and ever-popular Oxford Arms, where acquaintance was made with a fine pint of Wobbly Welder, before scarpering off for the last bus back to Hereford.

It is hoped that this festival will be repeated next year. With regular (normally hourly frequency) buses linking Hereford with all of the venues that took part, what better excuse do you need to get out into the hills? Alternatively, the *Great Escape* will be on BBC2 at 4.10pm next Easter Saturday. It's your call!

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## A REAL TASTE OF DOUBLE GLOUCESTER

*A St. Georges' Day excursion around some village pubs in Gloucestershire starred two recent National Pubs of the Year*

There was something wrong, very wrong indeed as the CAMRA minibus prepared to leave Hereford back in April with a full consist of thirsty Herefordshire branch members. There was no rain drumming incessantly on the minibus roof, not a drop of the stuff to be seen or heard, nor was there a biting wind with heavy grey clouds. In fact, it was broad blue skies and bright spring sunshine – certainly not the normal weather booked for a CAMRA day out. What on earth was going on? It was obviously a good omen for what lay ahead.



Not needed this time!

It was only an hour's journey before the minibus arrived beside the sparkling waters of the River Severn at Ashleworth Quay. Located at the end of a narrow lane, past a remarkable *National Trust* Tithe Barn, is the seriously flood-prone **Boat Inn**. You can see the evidence of past floods by looking at the various floodwater levels marked on the wall of this small, isolated and utterly charming three-room freehouse. A fascinating feature about the Boat is that it is surrounded on all sides with earth banks, and there's a set of floodgates to block the only road in. When secured against the floodwaters, the pub literally becomes an island, with an impressive telescopic elevated metal walkway that bridges the hundred yards or so across the deluge so customers can get to and from the pub. Clearly a case of the drinking must go on - come hell or high water.

The fine weather provided the opportunity to laze outside on the riverbank and watch the waters slipping by while drinking beers direct from the barrel: all of them served from a temperature-controlled stillage in a back room behind the pub's single bar-server. The beers at the Boat tend to have a West of England bent, and on this occasion included those from Great Western, North Cotswold, Gloucester, Wickwar, and Combined Breweries - plus a real cider. The Boat is a very old-fashioned place with many interesting original fittings and furniture; a yesteryear theme paralleled by the fact it sells items such as jars of cockles; home-made cakes, *Curly Wurlys* and a plethora of

other things you weren't too sure were still manufactured in our modern world.

### Swimming and wet pants

Before we left there was time to reflect briefly on a previous occasion a call was made at the Boat Inn on a CAMRA trip some years back. Granted it was at the 'wrong end' of a long day, and we may even have had one or two pints too many, but it still came as an enormous shock when - on arrival at the pub - one of our party promptly stripped down and dived head first into the river. I think we've all heard the old adage that alcohol and water don't mix, and this was the notorious River Severn. But to a collective and

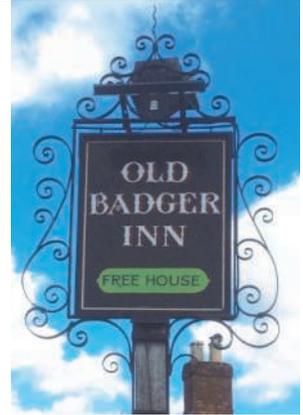


Beers, cockles and a Curly Wurlys all round at the Boat Inn

audible sigh of relief, he successfully swam across the river (and then back again). He then complained all the way home that he had soaking wet underpants!

A fight followed through the traffic congestion in Gloucester, before we emerged psychologically battered and bruised out the other end at the **Old Badger Inn** at Eastington. This was our lunch

stop. Once called the Victoria Inn, it is another “failed” PubCo pub, but which under independent new ownership has been quite mysteriously transformed back into a successful and thriving pub, now back at the heart of its village community. It was certainly doing a roaring trade on the day we were there. It’s family-friendly and food-orientated, but not at the expense of everything else that is deemed important with a good village local. Its revamped interior features bare timber and tiled floors throughout; big wooden tables; original fireplaces re-discovered, and some quaint little alcoves to hide away in. A multitude of pump clips attached to the ceiling confirm it takes its beer seriously too - and we weren’t disappointed with two beers from Bath Ales, and one each from Combe, Otter, Uley and Cotlegh Breweries resplendent on the bar – all in the good company of three local real ciders. This all helped wash down some hearty and very reasonably-priced food. There was no badger, young or old, to be seen anywhere on the premises, but taking pride of place on one wall is a large photo-montage telling the story of how the pub was rescued from a dreary and under-invested PubCo past by its dynamic and enterprising new owners. This warmed our hearts greatly, as we shuffled back outside into the still bright sunshine.



Not a Badger to be seen, but lashings of beer and cider to be enjoyed at Eastington’s revitalised village inn.

Next on the agenda was the first of the day’s two national prize-winners. Gloucestershire has provided three national *Pubs of the Year* in recent times including, for 2015, the Sandford Ale House on Cheltenham’s Regency High Street, but it was not one of the winners we were due to visit. Thus it was, after navigating the tortuously narrow streets of Berkeley and carefully avoiding any errant hot pokeres that might have escaped from the eponymous castle, we arrived at the nearby **Salutation Inn** at Ham. Known locally as ‘The Sally’, this place has won more awards than you can shake a stick at - there’s hardly a bit of wall-space left that isn’t adorned with an award of some sort or other. Most recently it was named CAMRA *National Pub of the Year* for 2014.



The Salutation Inn at Ham was full of surprises - one being its own brew was elsewhere!

besides its beers and ciders, it is a warm and friendly community pub. It has little, if anything, of architectural significance, but it definitely does cosy rather than flash - with a charming mishmash of old furniture (including bench seats) in rooms that all have a different and unspoiled (with just a hint of woodchip) feel about them. A wood-burner and piano complete the mix quite nicely. The Salutation is more a comfortable pair of well-worn trainers rather than a flash pair of high heels.

### A Highland delight

As we eagerly traipsed into the middle of three bars, we soon saw the merits of the place. There was a range of six real beers on the bar from breweries as diverse as Uley, Wye Valley, Bristol Beer Factory, and Butcombe. But the *pièce de résistance* was undoubtedly the very rare Shiehallion from Harviestoun Brewery - all the way from the Highlands of Scotland at 4.8% ABV, and yet it was only £3.40 a pint. On top of this was a selection of five draught ciders and two perries. And to crown the whole kaboosh off was an eclectic selection of bottles. What wasn’t to like? One can only wonder how the *Pub of the Year* judges extricated themselves with their livers still intact.

On initial inspection the Salutation appears quite unremarkable - not at all a pub a casual first visitor would guess was recently voted the best pub in the land, but

### Alien beer abduction

The only disappointment was that, since they now brew their own beer on the premises, we were unable to try some of it, as it had all been abducted by the local CAMRA branch for consumption at Gloucester Beer Festival - which was taking place on the weekend of our visit.

Sobbing gently at this missed opportunity, we promptly shifted on to another previous national winner, and one many Hopvine readers will be familiar with – the **Old Spot** in Dursley. You might be pleased to know it's still picking up awards since being named *National Pub of the Year* for 2007, and upon entering you can soon see why. The place was absolutely buzzing and has character in oodles – the complete opposite to the quiet contemplation of the Salutation. Roaring fires, sleeping dogs to step over, and virtually every inch of the walls crammed with curios, pictures and bric-a-brac - much of it taking a pig theme (for those not in the know, Old Spot is a variety of pig).



Inside, landlord Pete Tiley introduces us to his bar.



The trusty CAMRA minibus snoozes gently at Dursley's prize-winning Old Spot.

tening estuarine waters before we arrived in the delightful honeycomb-coloured village of Uley. This is the place that gives Uley Brewery its name and, perhaps unsurprisingly, the brewery is the highlight of the village, although everything was looking all safely tucked-up in bed for the weekend as we cruised by. However, our next destination - the village's **Crown Inn** - was to afford us ample opportunity to try no less than three of the Uley Beers – including a St.Georges brew, which was the first we had seen on our travels. Sad, when one considers it was St.George's Day that very day.

The Crown Inn, by dint of its location on the village green and opposite the exquisite and imposing parish church, in another life would be a hard-core gastro-pub. But other than a couple of tables set

### Old Ric's Old Spot

There were five beers on offer, including Uley Brewery's Old Ric - a brew that takes its moniker from an ex-landlord whose paternalistic portrait looms down from a large painting on one wall. Other beers were Cwtch from Newport's Tiny Rebel Brewery (itself currently Champion Beer of Britain); and three from Bath Ales, Wye Valley and Thornbridge - plus a cider. The party now split at this point: some squeezing into an impossibly cosy corner to be eyed suspiciously by a nearby dog that was laid prostrate on the floor, whilst the remainder retreated into the sun-trap, trellised patio-cum-garden area to take on the greenfly. It was all most agreeable in a very beery sort of way.

The level part of our trip was now behind us as we powered up and climbed out of the flatlands of the Severn Vale and up into the Cotswolds. Expansive views were enjoyed out across the glistening

for diners later that evening, it was a sight for sore (and alcohol-blurred) eyes to discover instead a real living and thriving unadulterated village pub. Unpretentious, but still comfortable with bare stone flags and a wood-burner in a single opened-out bar, the Crown is clearly more about enjoying a decent pint of beer and good company than it is about ordering a pan-fried sea bass with a bouquet of fresh garden vegetables in a dill jus. How completely refreshing is that? Almost as refreshing as the beers, in fact.

Heartened greatly by the thought that not all pubs in the Cotswolds need to be poncy restaurants to make a living, our odyssey now took on an urban dimension as we happened across Stroud. Once an industrial centre in its own right, it has long since closed and converted its dark satanic mills, but still retains great character with its stone architecture. It's a place that still has a few untamed corners too: you're more likely to find a *Pound Shop* here than you are an *Edinburgh Woollen Mills*.

### Not so micro-boardroom

Stroud's John Street is the home of the **Ale House** – a sort of not-very-micro micro-pub, owing to its considerable size. If the impressive Georgian façade and entrance don't impress as you first enter, then the cavernous and splendid interior definitely will. This is a most impressive establishment at every turn: beyond a contemporary fitted-out front room and towards the rear, is the beating heart of what might be called a beeropolis of a main bar area. The fine timber floors; original architraves and plasterwork, and a grand domed glass-panelled ceiling are a reminder of this building's illustrious past as a traders' boardroom, although most recently it was a live music venue.

Injection-moulded into this amazing space is a very swish, stylish and modern bar emporium (yes, that is the right word), replete with an array of ten beer pumps. It was at this point the note-taker for the trip was so overcome with emotion (or something not dissimilar) that no comprehensive record was made of the various beers and ciders on offer, other than to note Hophead Dark Star, and three from Mallinsons, Stroud and North Cotswold Breweries, plus a real cider featured. Suffice to say, the beer and the decidedly non-micro surroundings were absolutely first class, as the party sat contemplating the meaning of life, beer and the universe in the sumptuous leather upholstered armchairs and sofas. If there was one quibble to be had, that is the toilets are upstairs.

Daylight was starting to recede as we headed back to more rural quarters; the lengthening shadows now playing across the honeycomb stonework of the various buildings to create a most ghostly and beautiful glow. It's at times like this that one can (almost) forget the coach parties; boorish BMW drivers; gastro-pubs, and the numerous novelty fudge shops to appreciate the Cotswolds really is a most magical part of England.



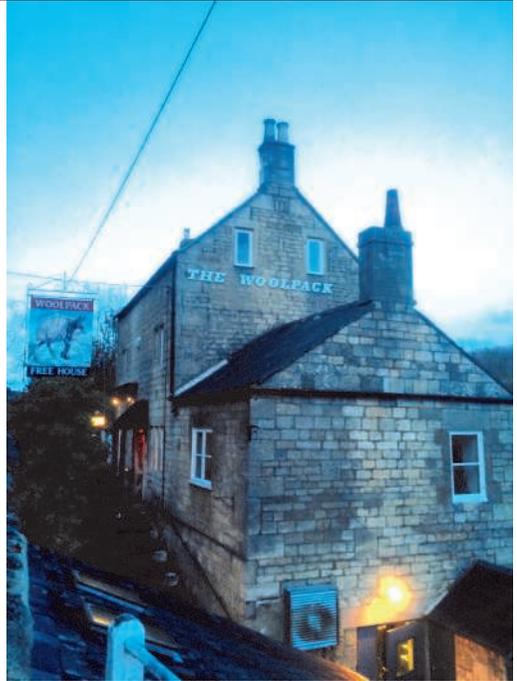
A grand entrance to Stroud's non-micro micro-pub



Probably more NASA than Grade II-listed, the impressively modern bar inside.

### Funicular fumbblings and a round of beers

CAMRA trips go to a lot of places and get up to a lot of things, but never before has a pub visitation boasted an erotic connection. Thus it was the minibus pulled up outside the **Woolpack Inn** at Slad. Perched on the side of a hill and falling away precipitously from the road, it's the sort of pub you might expect to find a funicular railway provided to get you to the bottom of the garden. The Woolpack's fifteen minutes of literary fame came about through local boy, Laurie Lee, who frequented the pub (but we're unsure about the funicular railway) up until his death in 1997 (he's buried in the parish church opposite the Pub). In his famous semi-autobiographic book, *Cider with Rosie*, he examines 'issues' surrounding youth, balmy summer days and drinking scrumpy in quantities likely to exceed the Chief Medical Officer's current recommended consumption for alcohol. Suffice to say, this intoxicating combination leads to a number of fumbling erotic encounters, but such notions were a million miles from our minds as we staggered into this splendid 17th Century stone-built pub and ordered a round from a selection of three different beers from Uley Brewery.



It was beer rather than cider at Laurie Lee's erstwhile local - the Woolpack Inn at Slad.

The Woolpack is only one room deep from the road outside (a result of its precarious cliff-top disposition, no doubt), but four inter-connected rooms run along its narrow length. Inside some people were eating a la gastro, but others were enjoying the beers and ciders amidst nothing more than good conversation. This was still very much a locals' pub at its heart, but it is also popular with diners at the weekends. Certainly, the food operation didn't detract from what is essentially a fine pub with an interesting past.

### Very affordable Royalty

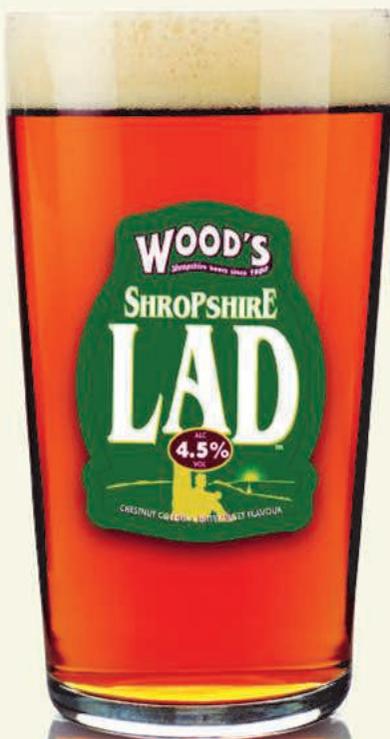
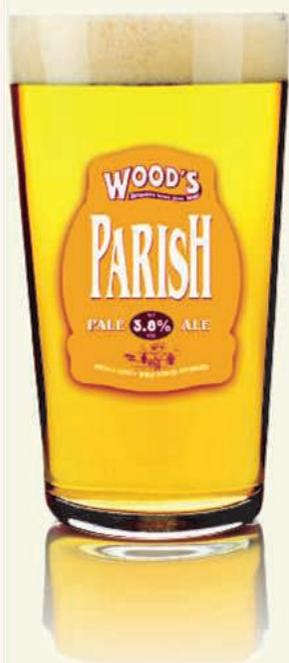
It was now time to head for home as darkness approached. We descended the Cotswold Escarpment back into the Severn Vale, but there was still one last pub to visit. The **Three Kings Inn** at Hanley Castle, near Upton-on-Severn isn't in Gloucestershire - it isn't even close to the border, but it was a no-brainer to call in on the way back to Herefordshire. One of only two pubs to ever have been awarded the *National Pub of the Year* twice (once as runner-up), this is a wonderful survivor. A 15th Century unspoiled marvel tucked away down a cul-de-sac next to the parish church, the three-bar redbrick inn (with its most unusual pub sign) has been in the Roberts family since 1911, and today is run by the amiable and very competent Sue Roberts. More remarkable even than the fine fireplaces, timbers and other fascinating original features, are the beer prices for the five brews on the pub's blackboards. Sue hasn't discovered the £3 a pint just yet, with even the stronger brews at typically no more than £2.80. It doesn't do food – just good conversation and live music twice a week. A third less-used bar normally only comes into use (as a tap room) for the annual beer festival held each November. Unfortunately, the note-taker omitted to record the beers on the bar, due to an entirely unexplained temporary visual impairment, but whatever they were they were most enjoyable!

So it was the party arrived back in Herefordshire happily ever after. Thanks go to Paul Grenfell for diligently navigating and driving the minibus, and to Paul Brinkworth for his meticulously thorough organisation and illustrated itineraries.

# WOOD'S

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## PENGETHLEY

### *By our Transport Correspondent*

What's in a name, that's what I say, but sometimes it can be a little confusing. The National Trust, for example, spell Pengethley with an 'e' firmly lodged between the 'l' and 'y'. It is there as plain as can be on their elegant marker post, but should it be Pengethly? That's the preferred spelling on their interpretation board. Take a casual look at the OS map and there's a Pengethly Grove, woodland next to, wait for it, Pengethley Manor Hotel. So when you alight at the bus stop by the entrance to the hotel don't be bamboozled; it is the one and same place.

The easy 6-mile walk starts at Pengethley, passes by the historic church of Hentland, then down to the River Wye along back lanes and onward to Sellack along a riverside path. It returns via the Lough Pool and Herefordshire Trail through to Broome Farm and Peterstow; there are a few short climbs on the latter section, but none is difficult!

There are two hostelries to enjoy on this ramble. The first is the Loughpool inn, a pub known for its restaurant principally, but it also welcomes those who simply want to call in for a drink. There are plentiful seats outside if the weather is warm. When we called in Wye Valley Butty Bach and Ledbury Best Bitter were on tap and in good condition. The Yew Tree is the final stop on the walk; the bus stop is one minute from the pub! It usually has a range of beers on offer including brews from Hobsons, Foxfield (Broughton in Furness) and Lancaster breweries, a tad cold on my last visit, but nevertheless an unusual selection for Herefordshire. The star turn, as far as we were concerned, was the Ross cask cider made from the orchard you've just walked through at nearby Broome Farm. Can't say better than that.

### **The walk**

Step off the bus at the stop just before the turn to Pengethley Hotel; you'll see a kissing gate a few metres away leading into the parkland. Go through it and head slightly left down the park, passing several veteran oaks which are reckoned to be over 800 years old; there's a pool to the right as you keep slightly left towards Hentland church. Go through a kissing gate by the church believed to originate from the 6th century. Walk ahead along a lane for half a mile to a junction

and then ahead again; you need to take more care as there's more traffic on this section. The road bends right and descends to a junction. Cross directly over and through a barred gate onto a track which bends right and leads to a path along the banks of the Wye. Go through another gate and ahead until you reach a way-mark post and you can see Sellack Bridge ahead. At this point, head slightly right towards Sellack church.

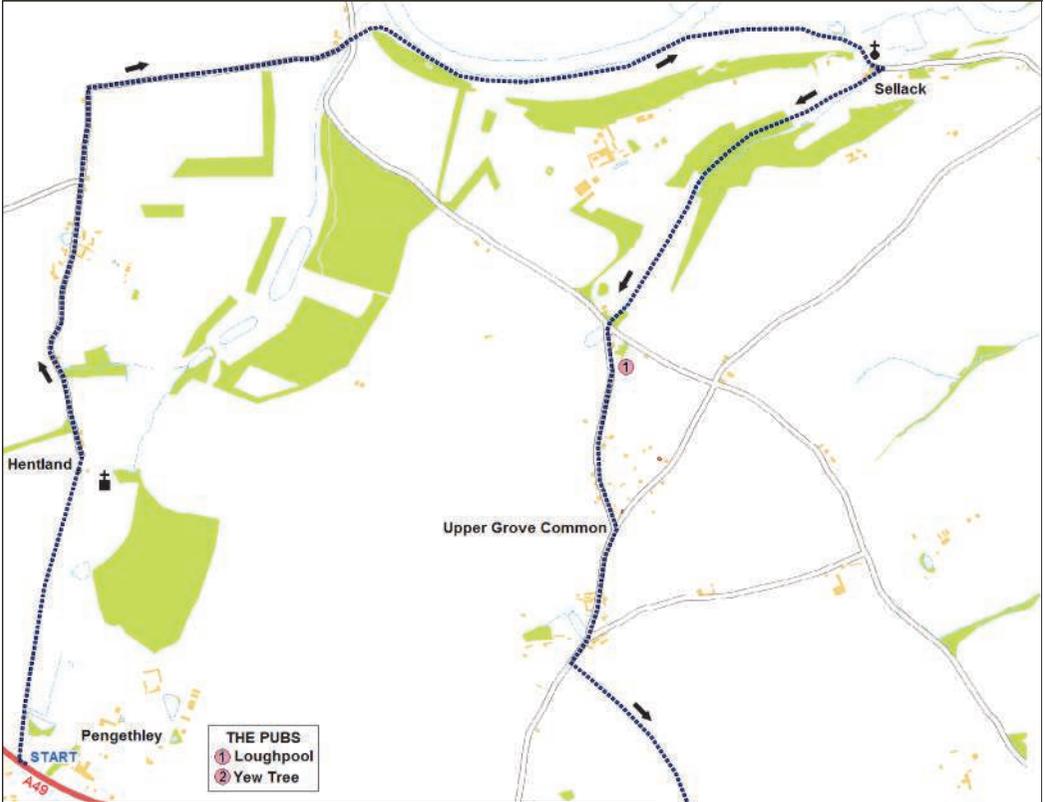
### **Sellack**

This small sandstone church is dedicated to St Tysilio (the only one in England) and has many fine features. Just beyond the churchyard, go over a stile on the right and walk ahead in a pasture which leads to a stile into a wood. It can get messy here after rain so watch out. Take the right fork and the path twists over tree roots to exit at a stile into another pasture in a dry valley. Walk ahead and look for a bridle gate (not the barred gate) leading on to the road. Go left and then immediately right to the Loughpool inn.

The pool is to the right! Continue on the road past the pub to a junction at Upper Grove Common; keep ahead and at the next junction, with another pool to the right. About 100 metres beyond go left through a small gate and walk ahead to a stile (care needed here) then drop down the hillside to cross a stile in the valley bottom. The path runs through to a footbridge and another stile. Once over turn left to walk along a track to a small gate by a barred gate. Go through it and climb past the much restored Flann. Pass through a small gate by the barrier and at the junction go left and then right up steps, through a gate, into a field. Head slightly left across the field to the A49 road.

### **Peterstow**

Go left to walk down Wellsbrook Lane until you reach the entrance to Broome Farm, the home of *Ross-on-Wye Cider & Perry Company*. Walk up to the car park and the path then follows a track bending slightly left into the orchard. It passes a compost toilet and turns right to run through cider trees and a lane up to the A49 in the village. Go left for the Yew Tree. The blossom is late this year so if you get out soon you might see the orchard in all its glory, but if not, there's plenty of produce from last year's crop to be had at the Yew Tree.



### Factfile

Map: Explorer 189 Hereford and Ross-on-Wye

Travel from Hereford

Stagecoach 32/33 bus leaves Hereford Railway Station (then Country Bus Stn) at 1045 and hourly until 1745 then 1942 on Mon-Sat, 1000 and every two hours until 2000 Sun and Bank Holiday Mon.

Return buses from Peterstow (stop is on main road just before pub) at 1258, and hourly until 1658 then 1858 (last one) on Mon-Sat and 0908 and every two hours until 1708, then 1903 Sun.

Travel from Ross-on-Wye

Stagecoach 32/33 bus leaves Ross (Cantilupe Road) at 1047 and hourly until 1647 then 1847 Mon-Sat and 0900 and every two hours until 1700 then 1855 Sun.

Return bus from Peterstow (stop at old Post Office) at 1130 and every hour until 1730, 1837 and 2025 Mons-Saturdays. Sundays 1037 and every two hours until 2037

For more information see website [www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info).

Traveline: 'Phone 0871 200 22 33 for up to the minute bus times.



### The Pubs

The Loughpool Inn is open Tuesdays-Sundays from 12 until 3 (3.30 Sundays) and from 6.30 in the evening. Closed Sunday evening and Monday. The Yew Tree is open from 12 noon every day all day. Check them out on What Pub!



## CAMRA FESTIVALS COMING SOON

### 14th Bromsgrove Beer Cider and Perry Festival

Bromsgrove Rugby Football Club, Finstall Park, Bromsgrove: a 10 min walk from Bromsgrove railway station (see box below for rail fares).

144 real ales and 50+ ciders and perries.

Thursday 30th June 6-11pm (CAMRA members only); Friday 1st July 12noon-11pm; Saturday 2nd 11am-9pm.

Details: [www.bromsgrovebeerfestival.org.uk](http://www.bromsgrovebeerfestival.org.uk)

### Beer on the Wye XII

Herefordshire's own festival.

Friday 8th - Sunday 10th July - for full details see page 3, back cover and also [www.beeronthewye.org.uk](http://www.beeronthewye.org.uk)



### Cotswold Beer Festival 2016

Postlip Tith Barn, near Winchcombe

Friday 22nd July, 7-11pm; Saturday 23rd, 11.30am to 3pm, 7 to 11pm; Sunday 24th, Noon to 3pm.

Note: car parking is some distance from festival site. Special buses operating. Tickets on sale now.

Details: [www.gloucestershirecamra.org.uk/cbf](http://www.gloucestershirecamra.org.uk/cbf)

### 15th Worcester Beer, Cider & Perry Festival

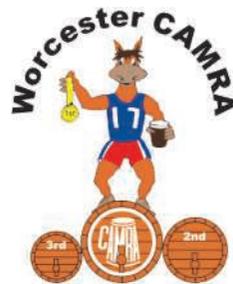
The Racecourse, Pitchcroft. 10 mins walk from bus station and Foregate Street rail station. See box below for rail fares.

170+ beers and 100+ Ciders and Perries.

Thursday 4th August, 5 -11pm; Friday 5th, 12noon-11pm; Saturday 6th, 12noon-10pm.

Tickets in advance via the festival website (required for the Friday evening and strongly recommended at other times) or on the door. Details:

[www.worcesterbeerfest.org.uk](http://www.worcesterbeerfest.org.uk)



17th Beer, Cider & Perry Festival

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Tuesday 9th August 5-10.30pm; Wednesday-Friday 10th-12th noon-10.30pm; Saturday 13th 11am-6.30pm. Details: [www.gbbf.org.uk](http://www.gbbf.org.uk)

- Special evening rail fares available to Bromsgrove/Worcester (£3.50).
- London Midland's 34% discounted *Groupsave* can be used anytime, if travelling in a group of three or more.

#### Advance Notice:

2016 Shrewsbury Beer Festival - 22-24 Sept - Morris Hall, Bellstone, SY1 1JB  
Great Welsh Beer & Cider Festival 2016 - 22-24 Sept - The Depot, Cardiff, CF10 5FE.

**CAMRA festivals charge a glass deposit, refundable on exit (subject to conditions). Discounted admission or beer tokens for CAMRA members at all CAMRA festivals.**

# Herefordshire CAMRA

## What's on

### Branch Meetings.

Wednesday 29th June: Beer in Hand, Hereford 8pm.  
Keep in touch with local news and events

Wednesday 28th July: Baiting House, Upper Sapey  
8pm. A chance to visit this newly refurbished pub.

Wednesday 31st August: Red Lion Hotel,  
Bredwardine. 8pm.

### Social Events

Friday 15th July: Visit to Ledbury  
Brewery. Meet at Verzons House  
7.30pm

Saturday 10th(tbc) September: By  
train to Birmingham to catch up  
**with city's changing pub scene.**

Saturday 15th October: By mini-  
bus to Cheltenham to visit pubs  
including the CAMRA National Pub  
of the Year.

Contact Social Secretary Paul Brink-  
worth for details, See page 43.  
Updates on

[www.herefordcamra.org.uk/diary](http://www.herefordcamra.org.uk/diary).

### Beer Festival Meeting

Monday 20th June: 8.00pm at the Barrels, St  
Owen Street, Hereford. Come along and join the  
team as we complete our plans for Beer on the Wye  
XII in July.

If you know of any event that might be of interest please contact the editorial team (details on page 43). Deadline for next issue August 12th 2016

## LOCAL BEER & CIDER FESTIVALS

Tuesday 14th to Tuesday 21st June Oxford Arms,  
Kington: A dozen locally-produced real ales, plus  
ciders and perries. [www.the-oxford-arms.co.uk](http://www.the-oxford-arms.co.uk)

Friday 17th to Sunday 19th June. Gillow Cider Festi-  
val, St Owens Cross, HR2 8LE. Cider, Perry, music  
and dancing. Camping. [www.gillowciderfestival.co.uk](http://www.gillowciderfestival.co.uk)

Friday 24th to Sunday 26th June. Monk, Monkland.  
Midsummer Beer & Cider Festival (see ad, page 27)

Friday 24th to Sunday 26th June. Linton Music Festi-  
val. 20 ales + cider. [www.lintonfestival.org](http://www.lintonfestival.org)

Friday 24th to Sunday 26th June. Farmers Arms,  
Wellington Heath: Beer & Beast Festival. 30 Ales, 10  
Ciders, Live Music, Southern-Style BBQ. 01531 634776  
(see ad, page 20)

Saturday 25th June. Bartestree Cider & Beer Festival  
[www.bartestreevillagehall.co.uk](http://www.bartestreevillagehall.co.uk)

Saturday 25th June. Green Dragon, Bishops Frome: 10  
guest ales, 15 ciders, hog roast, afternoon entertain-  
ment, evening live music 01885 490607

Saturday 25th June. Crown and Sceptre, Ross-on-Wye.  
Full range of Wobbly beers, plus live music.

Friday 8th to Sunday 12th July. BEER ON THE WYE

Friday 8th to Sunday 24th July. Kings Fee, Hereford:  
**Duke's Head, Leominster; Mail Rooms, Ross-on-Wye:**  
Wetherspoon Cider Festival. Up to 30 ciders, spread  
over the 17 days. Third-pint tasters available.

Saturday 16th July. **England's Gate Inn, Bodenham.**  
Annual Beer & Sausage Festival.

Friday 29th to Sunday 31st July Boot Inn, Orleton:  
7th Beer & Cider Festival. real ales plus local ciders.  
Live music, family entertainment 01568 780228 (see  
ad, page 12)

Friday 5th to Sunday 7th August Bay Horse Inn,  
Kings Acre Road, Hereford. 6th Beer & Cider Festival.  
Live music, BBQ, pig roast, curry & rice, icecreams,  
bouncy castle. (see ad, page 11)

Friday 12th to Sunday 14th August Gwatkin Cider,  
Moorhampton Park Farm, Abbey Dore: *Down on the  
Farm* - Cider and Music Festival. Real Ale; BBQ; Live  
Music. 780228 (see ad, page 18)

Thursday 25th to Tuesday 30th August Oxford  
Arms, Kington: [www.the-oxford-arms.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.the-oxford-arms.co.uk/whats-on)

Friday 26th to Monday 29th August. Barrels, Here-  
ford: 28th Barrels Beer Festival. The Annual Party -  
Beer, Cider & Music 01432 274968

Sunday 28th August. Sun Inn, Leintwardine: 11th  
Annual Beer Festival. The infamous Sun Inn Annual  
Beer Festival starts mid-day, camping available.  
01547 540705

Friday 2nd to Sunday 4th September. Broome Farm  
Cider Festival: Real ale available, Live Music, meet  
the cider-makers (Sunday). Tickets on sale June.  
Early booking advised. [www.rosscider.com](http://www.rosscider.com)

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Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No(s) \_\_\_\_\_

### Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

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I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association

I enclose a cheque for \_\_\_\_\_

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Applications will be processed within 21 days

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- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay by Direct Debit.
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June 2016

Landlords! Talk directly to your target market. Herefordshire pub-goers and real ale drinkers.  
**Advertise in the Hopvine**

The *Hopvine* is produced four times per year and, of the 4,000 copies of each issue, most are distributed to around 160 pubs in the county, where they may be read many times over by different customers. Others go to real ale pubs further afield, plus beer festivals etc.

**Attractive discounts** are available for entries in consecutive issues, and even bigger discounts for four issues paid in advance.

Completed ads can be accepted in .pdf .doc, .pub, and .jpg format, or just send us your information, and perhaps a logo, and we can compose the ad for you.

Current advertising rates (from)

Full page	£110
Half Page	£66
One third page	£44
Quarter page	£36

Do you miss issues of the *Hopvine* or live away from Herefordshire? You can get copies by post from David Powell, 18 Chatsworth Road, Hereford, HR4 9HZ. Send any number of stamped, self-addressed envelopes for A5 up to 100g OR 6 x 2nd class postage stamps for 4 copies (11 for 8 copies) OR cheque payable to Herefordshire CAMRA - £2.50 for 4 copies (£4.50 for 8 copies)

**120+**  
CASK BEERS

**110+**  
CIDERS &  
PERRIES

# BEER ON THE WYE

**July 8th, 9th & 10th 2016**  
**HEREFORD ROWING CLUB**

**GREYFRIARS AVENUE | HEREFORD HR4 0BE**

## HOT FOOD

**WORLD BEERS BAR**

**FAMILY FUN DAY  
ON SUNDAY**

**CAMPING  
AVAILABLE  
(facilities on site)**

## LIVE BANDS

The Skimmity Hitchers  
The Luke Doherty Band  
The Hayriders  
The Rooters  
The World of Subduction  
Mike Parker  
Slippery Slope  
Emma & The Professor

## ADMISSION

**FRIDAY: 2 - 11pm £4**  
**SATURDAY: 12 - 11pm £6**  
**SUNDAY: 12 - 5pm £1**

## QUICK ENTRY PACKAGES

**FRI £10 / Sat £15**

Including Admission, Glass,  
Programme and Drink Tokens

(Glass and unused tokens refundable)



[www.beeronthewye.org.uk](http://www.beeronthewye.org.uk)

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H&PE  
We are here for you!

Accompanied children admitted until 6pm. No children allowed on site after 9pm.  
The organisers reserve the right to refuse admission. (Challenge 21 and Hereford H.A.N.D. ban in operation)

H&PE  
We are here for you!